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The CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Its rise and progress

By H. M. RIGGLE

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The Christian Church

Its Rise and Progress

By H. Melbert Riggle

Author of "Man, His Present and Future,"
"The Sabbath and The Lord's Day,"
"Hell and Everlasting Punishment,"
"Christian Baptism," etc.

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PREFACE.

In presenting this work to the reading public, I think it proper to state that in its preparation I have not gleaned extensively from the archives of history, but have treated the subject more from a Scriptural than from a historical standpoint. There are other works that treat the subject historically, some presenting a narrative of the church, others a mere compilation of historical facts and evidences.

The author has endeavored to unfold some of the grandest and most beautiful truths contained in Holy Writ. Questions that are agitating the whole religious world have been treated. The church of God in all its magnificent splendor is portrayed in simple language. It is traced from its conception in the divine mind to its eternal home with God. Thus the reader is enabled to discern the church in its embryo state at the foundation of the world; to trace it through the four thousand years during which it was "a hidden mystery," "not made known to the sons of men," except in the types and shadows of the law; to see it when, at the ad-

vent of the Savior, it descended to earth as the heavenly Jerusalem, to be the golden city of a golden age and to become the light of the world, the joy of the earth; to follow it in its varied fortunes throughout all the centuries of the Christian era; and at last to behold it a blood-washed, white-robed throng dwelling in the eternal city of the new earth, that "better" and "heavenly country."

The book is really a Biblical trace of the church. With reference to the church, the Christian dispensation is properly divided into four distinct minor ages—the morning-light age, the papal age, the Protestant age of sects, and the evening-light age. We are now living in the fourth epoch—the closing days of this world's history. The fulfilment of some of the most important prophecies of the Bible is upon us. The pen of inspiration has given us data by which to calculate our whereabouts in the stream of time.

By the application of prophecy and revelation, I have endeavored to disclose the path of time and to trace the Christian church throughout the centuries of the Christian era. The subject treated is comprehensive, but I have en-

deavored to epitomize and present much truth briefly.

The author has a deep sense of gratitude to God, who by his Holy Spirit has guided him, and whose sweet, comforting presence has been much felt in the preparation of this work.

Believing that my humble efforts will not be fruitless, I now leave it in God's hand for the accomplishment of good.

In Christian love, I am,

Yours in the Master's service,

H. M. Riggle.

New Bethlehem, Pa., Jan. 2, 1911.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Bible record of the origin of man is unsurpassed by any other history of origins, either in artless simplicity or in scientific accuracy. Modern science has over and over again corroborated and confirmed the revealed account of the solidarity of the human family. Her best exponents have conceded the sublime fact that all men, notwithstanding their perplexing diversities, social, intellectual, and physical, must have originated from one single pair. In the similarity amongst ancient languages, philology has discovered historical monuments which prove not only that the different nations sprang from a common origin, but also that their forefathers must have gazed at the same sky, tilled the same soil, and lived under the same roof, and spoke the same language.

How beautiful and simple the inspired record which reveals to us that God "made of one every nation of men" (Acts 17:26)! Not only do we read that all men proceeded from one original pair, but the Book of God tells us that even the material substance of the woman was taken out of the man. This simple account un-

folds the sublime purpose of God, who is the God of order and whose nature and character is love. He loves harmony and peace, and therefore he created the woman out of man—a part of himself—so that they twain might be one not only by relation and attachment but also by nature. Thus children born of such union, where nothing but unity, harmony, and love could be expected, would of necessity love one another and live in harmony and peace, so that there would be only one great universal family in the whole world. But alas! sin destroyed the harmony and sowed the bitter seed of enmity and jealousy even between the first two brothers. What followed is too sad for narration. Enmity and hatred, jealousy and envy, division and strife, have checkered the pages of the history of the human family since the first innocent blood of a brother was shed by a brother's impious hand.

But the purpose of God in creation, though for a time thus obstructed, could never be frustrated. True, the human family was rent asunder by social, political, and religious factions, and seemingly became irreconcilably estranged from one another; but where sin abounded,

grace did much more abound. In due time Christ, by his vicarious suffering on the cross of Calvary, bridged the chasm between human hearts, ever abolishing the enmity, and thereby destroying the very seat of the trouble. He broke down the middle wall of partition and made both the Jews and the Gentiles one, and by the supernatural power of his cross created of the two a new man, thus making peace. He restored the broken harmony and reestablished unity on the divine and unshakable foundation of love. This new family or brotherhood is called "The Household of God," in which all the children have access to the Father through the one Spirit, and are built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph. 2:11-22.

This unification of the dispersed human family and the gathering together of the scattered children of God was the manifest mission of the glorious incarnation of the Son of God (John 11:52), and this sublime, divine purpose seems to underlie the whole plan of salvation and is interwoven throughout the Inspired Record. Unlike the eminent philosophers and the renowned moral teachers of Greece and Rome that preceded him, Jesus conceived from the beginning

of his mission the formation of a brotherhood of his disciples on the strong foundation of his divine personality as a leading factor recognized and confessed through the preaching of his gospel. Socrates and Plato taught ethics and philosophy, and made many disciples too; but neither of them conceived the idea of forming his disciples into a community or brotherhood. There was no solidarity among their followers. But Jesus of Nazareth, being imbued with the one-family idea of the Bible, revived the hidden purpose of God in restoring the broken unity and harmony of the human family. His was a mission as original as divine—original as regards human wisdom, divine as regards the inspired ideal. He was conscious of his mission when he claimed the august title of "The Light of the World" (John 8:12) and announced that he had "other sheep" which were not of the Jewish fold, and that them also he must bring, so that there might be one fold and one shepherd (John 10:16).

This mission was to be carried on after his death by his apostles, to whom the Holy Spirit revealed the long-forgotten mystery that the Gentiles were to be the fellow heirs and fellow

members of the body and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Eph. 3:6). The early disciples caught the fire of their Master and began building upon his foundation. The result is the Christian ecclesia of the New Testament, having one faith, one baptism, one Spirit, one Lord, and one God, and all one in matters pertaining to life and godliness. This was realized, in the embryo, the original and eternal purpose of God in creation (Eph. 3:11). Thus in Christ was the lost paradise regained.

Nor is this idea a stray thought in the Revealed Volume, a thought originated in the mind of some eccentric fanatic. The symbols and types are too numerous and the analogies too plain to be misunderstood. After the creation of the first family, when the natural relation and the ties of flesh and blood had given away to the inroads of the wild and unruly nature of sin, God destroyed the whole world with a flood; and by a remarkable coincidence, as it were, the only human survivors of the catastrophe consisted of a single family. This measure also failed to preserve the unity and harmony of the human race. Then God, so to speak, adopted

a different plan. He chose Abraham, a faithful man, desiring to establish through him one whole family again (Gen. 12:1-3; 18:18). Later the Lord raised up another man to be a lawgiver and a national leader, whom he instructed to build a sanctuary according to the pattern shown him by revelation. This was to serve as a bond of national unity. The erection of an altar on the other side of the river was condemned with great vehemence as violating the divine ideal of one people, one sanctuary, and one altar. Any possible occasion of division in the camp was not to be tolerated with indifference (Josh. 22:11-34). This temple was designed to be a symbol of the people of God indwelt by his Holy Spirit. The symbols of the bride, the body, the fold, and the household all clearly indicate the same plan. To conceive division and faction in the ecclesia as compatible with the divine purpose is to ignore the whole trend of revelation and to misinterpret the mind of God and his design for the highest good of man as revealed in His gracious dealings with humanity throughout the ages.

But when the unsophisticated reader of the Bible looks around him for the Biblical ecclesia,

the divine church, the household of God, his unprepared mind is bewildered at the unpleasant sight of sects and divisions that have rent the people of God for centuries. The Biblical conception of one family and the sublime ideal of a loving brotherhood is all but lost in modern Christendom. Nor does the study of ecclesiastical history help him very much. To him the existence of Christian sects is a strange phenomenon, deep-shrouded mystery. The crystal flow of the celestial river that was seen sparkling down the granite bed as it was descending towards the plain seems entirely out of sight. Instead there is a turbid stream, which now appears on the surface, now disappears in the sand, and whose contents are a strange admixture of various impurities gathered from the soil of its banks. There is a sense in which the stream, though lost at times to human observation, is still flowing underground; but to regain its original purity the water must be percolated through an effective filter.

To explain and unfold the divine plan and pattern, to elucidate the origin and development of the ecclesia, to trace its gradual degeneration into corruption and its final reappear-

ance in glory—such are the objects of the following pages. An honest effort has been made to render a sincere apology for the church of God and to explain some of the most perplexing questions of modern theology and ecclesiastical polity.

We earnestly invoke the divine guidance and wisdom upon the reader, that he may understand the deep mystery of God revealed to his church by his Spirit. May the same Spirit that conceived the plan and developed it into the divine ecclesia reveal it to his people. Amen.

John A. D. Khan.

Anderson, Ind.

The Christian Church
Its Rise and Progress

Israel's Night.

As a result of the fall of man into sin back at the foundation of the world, Adam and Eve lost Paradise, holiness, eternal life, and the companionship of God, and reaped sorrow, misery, and death. Moreover, all their posterity fared the same result, and the whole world was enshrouded in darkness and sin. In this period, we are told, "death reigned"; that is, spiritual death, which came as a result of universal sin. Man stood in the attitude of a guilty violator of God's holy and infinite law, and hence was under an infinite penalty. Since the broken law was eternal, the penalty for its violation was eternal. The justice of God demanded that man suffer for his disobedience. God's immutability demanded that the penalty of his law be executed. To lift the penalty, he would have been obliged to abolish his law; but since that law was "holy, just, and good," he could not abol-

ish it and yet be the God of law and order. Thus man seemed eternally and hopelessly lost.

But mercy rejoiced against judgment. The infinite love of God for lost humanity brought his infinite wisdom and knowledge into action. That wisdom, which is far beyond our comprehension, yes, "past finding out," schemed a way of escape, a plan of salvation. It was by providing an atoning sacrifice in the person of his own Son. This secured deliverance from the awful penalty and made the salvation of a lost world possible.

Long ages before that plan was fully revealed and opened to mankind in the coming of Messiah, the Lord cast its shadow upon earth. It takes a substance to make a shadow, and the substance must exist before the shadow. In this, the substance was the wonderful plan of salvation and redemption then hid in the wisdom and knowledge of God—a "mystery hid from generations and ages," hid in God, "kept secret since the world began"; a mystery "which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men," but "now is made manifest" "in Christ Jesus our Lord." Its shadow was the law, its tabernacle, sacrifices, blood, and service. The

"law was a shadow of good things to come." God selected the literal seed of Abraham—Israel—to be his chosen people. To them he delivered the law and all the blessings of his kingdom in figures and shadows. The giving of the law was the ushering in of a day of good things to Israel. In type, "they all drank of that spiritual Rock"—Christ. That dispensation and law had some "glory" (2 Cor. 3:7-11). Yes, brilliant rays of light from heaven shone upon earth. Through priests and prophets man could converse with his Creator and make his desires known. This was a blessed privilege enjoyed by Israel; a day of preparation for the ushering in of a still more glorious day.

But that people, to whom God delivered the lively oracles, forsook the God of their fathers and, as a nation, drifted into darkness and idolatry. This brought the wrath of God upon them, and he answered them no more through prophets. The last prophet through whom God definitely spoke to Israel was Malachi. Then came an awful night of about four hundred years upon that favored people, in which no prophet's voice was heard. This was foretold by the

prophet Micah as follows: "Thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets. . . . Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer from God." Micah 3:5-7. Midnight darkness filled the earth. No prophet spoke; there was no answer from God. This was the period from Malachi to the ministry of John the Baptist. Men sought in the darkness of that night to find the word of the Lord, but could not find it. Thus was the prophecy of Amos fulfilled: "They shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst." Amos 8:11, 12.

The Gospel Day Foretold.

With prophetic eye the seers of old foresaw a better day—a day of salvation. That which they enjoyed in type and shadow was to reach the substance in Christ, who would usher in the most propitious age of grace and glory the world would ever see. Thus Isaiah foretold it: "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee." Isa. 49:8. Paul, after quoting this language of the prophet, makes the application. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. This great day of salvation was ushered in by the coming of Messiah to save the world; and its end will be when Christ is revealed from heaven to judge the world.

Since the beginning of time one long age has followed another, in which God "at sundry times and in divers manners in time past spake unto the fathers by the prophets," but in "these last days" hath "spoken to us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2). These days, then, which go to make up the gospel age or day are the "last." This is why Paul denominates the gospel age "the

dispensation of the fulness of times" (Eph. 1:10); that is, the dispensation when time is full. "Little children, it is the last time. . . . We know that it [the present age] is the last time." 1 John 2:18. Time is a measured portion of duration.

The gospel age is frequently in Scripture termed *a day*. The prophets in speaking of things that were to occur in the current dispensation said, "It shall come to pass in that day." They foretold the coming of Christ, the setting up of his everlasting kingdom, his glorious reign of peace, and the beauties of his great salvation. Even Abraham foresaw these things. As Jesus expressed it, "your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." John 8:56.

The Morning Light is Breaking.

While the world was shrouded in darkness, and no prophet's voice could be heard; while Israel, with a few individual exceptions, was engulfed in sin and idolatry, forsaken of God; while the then known world was under the rule of pagan Rome, and heathenism held sway in the hearts of men everywhere—suddenly there appeared "one crying in the wilderness" and saying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." After four hundred long years of silence, a prophet appeared, yea, more than a prophet. John, the looked-for Elias, the harbinger of a new day, was now preparing the way for Messiah to begin his ministry. "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light." John 1:6, 7. Of John and his work, the angel told Zacharias this: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke

1:16, 17. Zacharias said of him, "And thou, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins." Luke 1:76, 77.

This was the dawning of a new day, the breaking forth of earth's most glorious day—the day of salvation. The prophets foresaw this, and spoke of it as a clear morning. Isaiah foretold it in these words: "The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come." Isa. 21:11, 12. Dumah signifies silence. This was the time of silence from Malachi to Christ. The inquirer asks, "What of the night?" namely, What time of night is it? The watchman cried, "The morning cometh." This morning was the clear morning of the Christian era. "For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light,

and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. 60:2, 3. This time of darkness was the night of Judaism. But it was foreseen that the Lord would arise and that his glory would be seen. This refers to the ushering in of the better dispensation. The coming of Christ was to be a beautiful sunrise, and the Gentiles were to come to the brightness of his rising. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves in the stall." Mal. 4:2.

The Pristine Glory—The Ushering in of a Clear Day.

In fulfilment of these predictions, Christ came the Sun of righteousness, and ushered in a clear day. "Weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning." Nineteen centuries ago a babe was born in the stable of an inn, in the Roman province of Judea. At this time Cæsar Augustus was an absolute sovereign. With unlimited power, he ruled over three hundred millions of people, comprising the Roman empire. Such power no mortal ever swayed before. Little did this proud ruler of all the world then known dream, as he sat upon his throne in gorgeous apparel, that a new-born babe who was slumbering in a manger, in the town of Bethlehem, in far-off Syria, and whose infant cries were mingled with the braying of donkeys, the lowing of cattle, and the bleating of goats—little, I say, did this mighty sovereign dream that this lowly infant was destined to establish a religion and kingdom before which all the glory and power of the proud Cæsars would fade away. But, dear reader, it was so. At the birth of that babe the bells of heaven rang

and all the angels worshiped. The glad news was at once wafted from heaven to earth that this was the "Savior, . . . Christ the Lord." Shepherds on the Judean hills heard the angels sing the glad refrain, "Glory to God in the highest."

"Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring [sunrising, margin] from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:78, 79. The advent of the Savior was a beautiful sunrising. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Matt. 4:16. Christ himself was that light. He said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Christ was not the light of one nation only, Israel, but the light of "*the world.*" Yes, he was the "salvation" which God "hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:25-32). "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light

of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Acts 13: 47.

Surely this was a glad morning to the inhabitants of earth, who for long centuries had sat enshrouded in the night of sin. Brilliant, transplendent light broke forth in the earth, salvation waters began to flow, and thousands were made to rejoice in a Redeemer's love. They could say, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." Rom. 13:12. The gospel message was like "a light that shineth in a dark place"; and as people accepted it, Christ entered into their life, like a beautiful "day-dawn" and "day-star" (2 Pet. 1:19). Oh, how beautiful, clear, and bright was the dawning of the gospel day!

The gospel of salvation that Christ preached penetrated the dark places of sin and idolatry, like sun-rays driving back the darkness of night. Wickedness in the hearts and lives of men gave way to grace and truth. Christ established his church. True holiness adorned her fair brow Unity and purity were her chief characteristics. Of her it is said, "Thou art all fair, my love;

there is no spot in thee." S. of Sol. 4:7. And again, "My dove, my *undefiled* is *but one.*" S. of Sol. 6:9. Unity and purity are inseparable; one can not exist without the other. Holiness is the mainspring of all gospel truth. It is a golden thread which runs all through the New Testament. As long as the people of God possessed true holiness, they were one and were fortified against all apostasy. We read of the believers assembled on the day of Pentecost, "They were all with one accord in one place." After the church had multiplied to thousands, "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul" (Acts 4:32). The reason of this was that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" and that "great grace was upon them all." Judgment went forth against sin with such authority that "of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them." "And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things." Acts 5:11. "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the

people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." Acts 5: 12-16.

Such was the church of God in her primitive glory. Clothed with the authority, power, light, salvation, holiness, and truth, of Christ, her great head, she went forth against the combined kingdoms of sin and darkness. The church shone in the earth, because it reflected the light of Christ to sin-darkened souls. "Ye are the light of the world," he said to his disciples. Truly, in those days her light shone as the bright morning sun.

The Primitive Church.

As we stand on the summit of present truth and point our telescope back over the mists and clouds that move along at our feet, and over the twelve hundred and sixty years of utter darkness that extend far beyond, even into the third century, we behold, on the mountains of God's own holiness, the temple of God, resplendent with the morning light of his own glory. With admiration we view her; and, behold, she is "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." She is "all fair," the city of the great king. That golden city is *the primitive church.*

As set forth in the oracles of God, her prominent attributes are the following: Divinity, Organization, Visibility, Oneness, Unity, Catholicity, Exclusiveness, Holiness, Unchangeableness, Indestructibility, and Perpetuity. These we shall consider in their order.

THE DIVINITY OF THE CHURCH.

She is of divine origin. Her inception is coeval in the mind of God with that of the plan of salvation. Her origin, being the immediate

result of redemption, was inseparable from it. Since, therefore, in the counsel and good purpose of God, Christ was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), the church redeemed through his blood also stood before the divine mind parallel with the gift of his Son. Of that holy institution, he cast a beautiful shadow upon the earth, in the form of the temple and all its contents. And after "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after," in due time "Christ, as a son over his own house," appeared and built this beautiful church of the living God. He adorned her foundations and walls with the pure gold of his heavenly love, and set them with the precious stones of his graces and gifts; he adorned her pillars with the robes of his righteousness; and he shed in her the light of his own glory. She is from heaven. Along with Christ her builder, she is the gift of infinite love. She is "God's building," chosen of him for his own dwelling-place; and here he spreads a continual feast of love for all his heaven-born children. As the "true tabernacle" of present divine testimony, the Lord pitched her and not

man (Heb. 8:2). As the house of God, he that buildeth all things in her is God (Heb. 3:4). As the beloved city, she "hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Her foundation is Jesus Christ the divine Savior. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Her life and light is the "eternal Spirit."

Her creed is the pure Word of God. Thus spake God by the mouth of his servant Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." Deut. 18: 18, 19. This is fulfilled in his Son, as the apostle testifies (Acts 3:22, 23). God here announced that he would put his words in the mouth of this prophet; and when he came, he testified, saying, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." John 14: 10. Therefore "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the

fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Heb. 1:1, 2. This adorable Christ came into the world and delivered the perfect laws of his kingdom, and when about to finish his mission on earth he said, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them." John 17:8. And when he sent forth his ministers to preach his gospel to every creature, he commissioned them to make disciples in all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). Thus we see that Christ Jesus spoke all the words that the Father "put into his mouth," and all that he had commanded him to speak; and the Son likewise commissioned his apostles to publish all that, and only that, which he gave them. Therefore, "All Scripture divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for that discipline which is in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly fitted for every good work." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, Emphatic Diaglott.

God the Father, then, is the source of this new

covenant, and Jesus Christ the mediator. Its objects are the "conviction" of men in sin, and the teaching and discipline in righteousness of all the saints of God. The result is that God's people are perfect. As divinely inspired discipline, it corrects every error and teaches every obligation of righteousness in all our relations to God and to man.

By means of this perfect law the man of God —every man of God—may be perfect, thoroughly furnished in all that pertains to a life of righteousness, and fully instructed in every good work. So if the Scriptures of divine truth are unsuited or insufficient as a discipline for any people, it would indeed appear that such are not men of God. The creeds that men have multiplied in the earth testify against themselves and in favor of this divine Book of discipline. They very generally admit that the Word of God is the only inspired and infallible rule of faith and practise, "so that whatever can not be read therein nor proved thereby, it is not necessary to receive or believe." So they say, and yet they impose upon their unwary joiners heaps of forms, traditions, and rules having no place in the inspired discipline of the divine

church. God's church is a "spiritual house," and to her was given a spiritual law; but earth-born associations, even though called churches, are earthly in their tendency, and therefore they can not be governed by a spiritual law. For this reason they make their own laws, and amend them according to their own option. But the divine and heavenly law of the Lord, perfect in all its doctrines and ordinances, is well suited to be the discipline of his holy church.

Her government is divine, not only in the legislative department, as we have just seen, but likewise in its judicial and executive departments. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." Isa. 9:6. "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion." Micah 4:8. "He is the head of the body, the church, . . . that in all things he might have the preeminence." Col. 1:18. A divine government in the highest sense: a theocracy not only appointed by but administered of God. Even "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4:6. "It is the same God which worketh all in all." 1 Cor. 12:6. He chooses men for elders

and deacons, as "governments" and "helps"; but these, as well as all the members of the body, have no right or power to act, except as "it is God that worketh in them." If, therefore, they teach or exhort, it is by his Spirit dwelling in them; if through them judgment is dealt out, it is not "man's judgment," but his that dwelleth in them. So her government is indeed all divine; yea, it is a government of God, working all things in all the members.

Her walls are salvation (Isa. 26:1; 60:18). "Behold, God is my salvation." Isa. 12:2. Therefore her walls are also divine. She has a divine door, even Jesus Christ himself (John 10:7, 9).

Having been purchased, founded, and built by God, he claims in her the exclusive right of proprietorship. She is not "our church," but "God's building," divinely owned, and his glory he will not give to another.

Her members are all the sons of God and bear his holy image.

She is even divinely named. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. 3:14, 15. And let

not men or devils presume to characterize her by blasphemous names which they invent.

Behold, she is all divine.

THE CHURCH IS AN ORGANIC STRUCTURE.

Therefore when men charge us with discarding all organizations, they either ignorantly or wilfully misrepresent us. As the Word teaches, so we teach. The church that Jesus purchased with his own blood, he also "built" (Matt. 16: 18); that is, organized. "In whom [Christ] all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple into the Lord." Eph. 2: 21. These scriptures and many others clearly set forth the church of God as a symmetrical and perfectly organized structure. Of this fact there is no question; but with regard to who holds the prerogative of organizing the body, not all so well agree.

The general teaching in sectarian theology is that God only saves and gathers men out of the world into a general mass and that it is the duty of ministers to form the material thus provided into organic form. But our teaching is that God not only saves men into his church, but also forms them in due order and really or-

ganizes the church itself. In order to show which position is correct, we will now appeal to the Word. A few texts will be sufficient to settle the question. The church, as we have seen, is a building, a house; that is, an organic structure. Now, it must be apparent to all that whoever is the architect and builder of a house is also its organizer. But "he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house." And "he that built all things is God." Heb. 3:3, 4. "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." 1 Cor. 12:18. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles," etc. Verse 28. To furnish with organs, "built," "compact," "fitly framed together," and to "temper the body together" cover all that is included in the word "organize." And "all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit." 1 Cor. 12:11. Yea, "it is the same God which worketh all in all." 1 Cor. 12:6. He, then, through the Spirit, is the organizer of his own church.

As we view the pure church in her morning glory, we see her a perfect organized body. She had law, discipline, and government. This was all contained in the gospel—the New Testament.

The law of Christ being a perfect rule of faith, the church needed no other, and it needs no other today. There is no excuse for the modern creeds of men. Modern sects are of human origin; hence they need man-made rules and discipline. The church of God is divine; hence the divine law is sufficient for its government.

Moreover, the Lord calls, qualifies, and sends forth by his Spirit certain ones for the ministry. Among these are evangelists, pastors, and teachers. They prove their call by their ability to minister. Such are acknowledged by the church, and by the direction of the Lord are ordained by the imposition of hands to the important work to which the Lord has called them. This is all done by the direction of the Holy Spirit, without voting into office. In every congregation saved out of the world by the blood of Christ, the Lord calls certain ones and by his Spirit qualifies them to be elders or overseers. Others he calls to the work of deacons. "He sets the members every one in the body as it pleaseth him." The ministry recognize these calls and by the laying on of hands, just like the apostles and ministers of old, dedicate to the various kinds of work those whom the Lord has

chosen and qualified. This is called ordination. These officers of the church are in authority, and execute his word. They are called "overseers." They are not made so by man, but "the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts 20:28). The church is commanded thus: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." Heb. 13:17.

So before the advent of any of the modern sects God's church was a perfectly organized structure; and we are happy to say that since we have come out of and discarded these sects of human origin, and have been abiding only in the church divine, we have the same government, rule, discipline, officers, authority, and organization that the primitive Christians had.

THE VISIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

"But these people," it is alleged of the saints of the most high God, "do not believe in a visible organized church." This again is an untrue statement. We teach that there are both an invisible and a visible phase to the church of God. Since it is the Lord who "works all in all the members," this work being accomplished through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit,

the church must be invisible. Thus through the Holy Spirit, God organizes, builds, and adds members to the church, calls and qualifies its officers for their responsible work. As regards its living head, its door of entrance, its eternal foundation, the spiritual life that animates it, the operation of the Spirit in the distribution of its gifts, and in many other respects, the church is invisible. We are glad to say, however, that this glorious temple built by an invisible God is a visible church. She is "the light of the world," "a city that is set on a hill" (Matt. 5: 14). As the wind, though an invisible power, produces effects that are perceptible to the eye; so the hand of God, though invisible to man, builds and organizes a church that is seen of all.

Salvation constitutes us members of God's church; and while, as before stated, the operation of the Spirit in salvation is invisible, the effects produced in the individual will be visibly manifested in his life. All who become members are new creatures, walk in newness of life, and serve him in newness of spirit. This great change is seen by all. The saved man is a living epistle, "known and read of all men," a

"gazing-stock," a "spectacle [theater] unto the world, to angels, and to men." Others "see his good works." Such individuals are visible to all men as real Christians—as members of the church of God. Thus the membership in the divine church is visible membership. Every member is known by his fruits. Though organized by the invisible Spirit, the church is composed of men and women who are as visible now as they were when they were in the kingdom of darkness.

While the kingdom of God is substantially the same as is the church, the former relates only to the spiritual leaven and unseen power of God that transforms the hearts of men into righteousness and fills them with "all joy and peace in believing." Hence it "cometh not with observation." The church, on the contrary, is the assembly of the saved, the household of God. It includes the body no less than "the hidden man of the heart." "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" 1 Cor. 6:16. "Christ," "his body," and "the church" are all identical in 1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 27, 28. It is in our physical bodies that we compose the assembly of God. This shows that she is a visi-

ble ecclesia. A house, a vine, a family, an army with banners, a light, the moon, the mother, and a city set on a hill—these are the most common figures of the church; and all these denote visibility.

The saints forsake not the assembling of themselves together. Wherever a number of people fully accept Christ, whether in a country place or in a city, they assemble together for worship. These assemblies constitute local churches, geographically distributed throughout the world. All such assemblies are visible. Surely Barnabas and Paul, who assembled a whole year with the church at Antioch (Acts 11: 26), did not gather together with something they saw not—with unseen spirits. Saints, as an assembly, worship God. This worship consists in prayer, song, exhortation, testimony, praise, and preaching. All such meetings and public devotions are visible.

The saving effects of the gospel ministered through the church are visible. God calls and qualifies certain persons to preach this gospel. Their preaching produces joy, comfort, and peace in the hearts of believers. They express this in song, praise, and spiritual worship.

Sinners are melted and under pungent conviction fall at the public altar, cry for mercy, and find deliverance. All this is visible.

God is a God of order. Through the Holy Spirit he organizes every local assembly raised up through the preaching of the gospel. He sets the members in the body as it pleases him. As before stated, this work is invisible, but these members who constitute the body are visible. Its ministry—evangelists, pastors, and teachers—are visible. They feel the call of God upon them and exercise in their respective callings. Their call and work is recognized by the church in which they labor, and they are publicly ordained by the laying on of hands. Whether they be classed as local or traveling elders—called pastors and evangelists—their work is visible. Deacons are chosen and ordained to look after the temporal affairs of the church. Their work also is visible.

Then again, the ministry are placed in authority. They are ambassadors for Christ. The chief shepherd and governor of his people has placed "governments" in this church (1 Cor. 12:28). These are vested in the holy ministry. As ensamples to the flock, they teach, warn, ad-

monish, rebuke, and execute his Word. To them he says, "Hear the Word at my mouth and give them warning from me." "Them that sin, rebuke before all." To the church the following charge is given: "Remember them that have the rule over you, men that speak unto you the Word of God." "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourself to them." Heb. 13: 7, 17, R. V. This is government, and it is visible.

And again, in the exercise and manifestations of the gifts placed in the church there is visibility. The Lord has placed in his church many spiritual gifts—gifts of exhortation, preaching, wisdom and knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, discerning of spirits, tongues, etc. All these are visibly manifested.

So the church of God stands out before us the most beautiful, visible institution on earth.

Sects, then, are not necessary to make the church visible. In this respect they are worthless. This theory is generally circulated by sectarians in defense of their own rival organizations, that the constitution of sects is essential to the visible manifestation of the church. A sect is a portion "cut off." Is there any sense, rea-

son, or divine truth in the teaching that an invisible body is made visible by cutting off a portion of it? None of the present sects came into existence until the third century. Was God's church an invisible thing on earth for nearly three hundred years? Who can affirm that the multitude of sects have made visible the church of God, from which they are severed by their particular creeds? We affirm in the presence of the Judge of all men, with a clear consciousness of his truth to support our proposition, that the creation of the sects of Christendom have had exactly the opposite effect. Their traditions have made "the Word of God of none effect." Their confusing creeds, heaps of rubbish, and interminable machinery have utterly subverted and well-nigh hidden the church that Jesus builded. As the historian D'Aubigne says, in the third century an "earthly association," "an external organization," was gradually substituted for "the interior and spiritual communion which is the essence of the religion of God." Then, says the historian, "the living church retired gradually within the lonely sanctuary of a few solitary hearts"; that is, the real church of God was almost hidden from view by the over-

spread pomp of the false. So, then, men's sects do not make visible God's church, but, on the contrary, obstruct her life and obscure her glory. These are facts of the history that no honest and intelligent man can deny.

The Babel of human sects long obscured the sight of the church of the first-born. Until the evening light revealed the true church as she shone out in the morning of the dispensation, everybody looked upon man-made substitutes as the divine church, and the body of Christ, which only is the church, was scarcely discerned at all.

Visibility is a *natural* characteristic of the church of God. Thus the church of God did not become visible by the organization of sects; for in the days of primitive Christianity none of the modern sects existed. Those who speak of God's invisible church and can see it visible only in sect organizations hold a superstition of the Dark Ages. Babylon theologians teach that God takes members into his invisible church, while they admit members into the visible. In this they are without any Scriptural support. It is true that the world can not see the head of the church, as do the Christians, for

he manifests himself unto the latter as he does not unto the former; but all can see the children of God, and they are the body of Christ, the church. "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." This again explains why the masses of sect-members do not discern Christ nor his church. It is because they are sinners, and Satan blinds their eyes to their condition by telling them that Christ and his church are invisible.

Again, the class-book of God's church is not here on earth nor seen by natural eyes. But, notwithstanding this, the spiritual "read their title clear" and know their names are written there.

So the church, without any tampering by man, is a glorious and visible city of God on earth, yea, so very visible that it is even the light of the world.

ONENESS OF GOD'S CHURCH.

As there is but "one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all"; so likewise there is but "one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." It was the purpose of God

to save both Jews and Gentiles through the gospel of his Son. Now, between these two classes was a great gulf of prejudice and vast separation in sentiment and education, so that it might very reasonably be thought that characters so remote from each other could never be blended together in one body and enabled to live agreeably under one faith. Did, therefore, the Lord indulge their alienation from each other, and their extreme peculiarities, by providing separate folds? He did not. Said the Great Teacher, "Other sheep I have [Gentiles], which are not of this fold [not Jews]: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10: 16. These antipodes of humanity, if saved at all, had to be brought together into one fold. Which class, then, was required to surrender its position to the other? The answer is, "He put no difference between us and them." "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin." The apostle confessed that the Jews were no better than the Gentiles. Neither class had to come over to the other, but both to God through Christ Jesus; and here is the beautiful result: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and

hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Eph. 2:14-16.

Then, for all the saved of the nations of the earth God has provided but "one fold." In it are peacefully blended together men of the most widely conflicting idiosyncrasies, and races of the most opposite customs and religions. Since, therefore, the infinite grace of God is manifestly sufficient to mold all men into one harmonious body, there is need of only one church. Every description of the church shows that it is but one. Every relation that she sustains to her God demands that she be one. Accordingly, we are told that Christ "is the head of the body, the church." As there is but one head, there can be but one body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

But now are they many members, yet but one body." 1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 20. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Rom. 12:4, 5. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Col. 3:15. These and many similar scriptures declare in the most positive terms that God acknowledges but one body. There is but one true church or assembly, just as there is but one true God. Since Christ calls us into one body, the call to join various bodies must proceed from antichrist. There is absolutely but one body and one Christ its head.

Again, the church, or divine congregation, sustains in some respects the relation to Christ that a wife does to her husband. "And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present

you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." John 3:29. "For thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." Isa. 54:5. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev. 19:7, 8. Here are five texts establishing this beautiful relation between Christ and his church. To admit, therefore, the idea of more than one church would impute to Christ the sin of polygamy. A shocking blasphemy!

But again, we find the divine ecclesia recognized as his own family, his household. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. 3:15. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Eph. 2:19. Since no man can rightly have two families, God has but one church, which is the holy family.

"Why, then," some one may ask, "do we read of 'churches' in the Bible?" It is true the word "church" frequently appears in the plural; but a little attention to the word will convince any honest mind that the church of God is plural only in its diversified geographical location, but in a variety of faiths and orders, never. Accordingly, the word never occurs in the plural except when the writer is speaking of God's assembly located in several cities or in various localities throughout a country or province. For examples:

"Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified." Acts 9:31.

"And he went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches." Acts 15:41.

"As I teach everywhere in every church." 1 Cor. 4:17.

"As I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." 1 Cor. 16:1.

"And so ordain I in all churches." 1 Cor. 7:17.

"The churches of Asia salute you." 1 Cor. 16:19.

"They returned again to Lystra, and to

Iconium, and Antioch: . . . and when they had ordained them elders in every church." Acts 14: 21, 23.

In all the above instances except the last the word "churches" refers to the congregations of God located at various places throughout one or more countries. In the last the reference is to the congregations in three cities. That these churches were not separate sects is clear from the fact that they were all combined under the same ministry. One inspired apostle enjoined rules upon them all; but we all know that no bishop of one sect has jurisdiction over another ecclesiastical order. By means of any complete concordance you may see that "church" is never once used in the plural number when referring to the disciples of Christ in any one city. No matter how large the city and how numerous the believers, there is but one church of God in it. This church, however, may have had several places of assembling on account of not all the members being able to meet in one place. This evidently was true of the church at Antioch, where the believers numbered thousands. Yet when all these were spoken of, they were termed "the church that was at Antioch," or "the church

of God which is at Corinth." 1 Cor. 1:2. "The church of the Thessalonians." 1 Thess. 1:1. "Unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." Rev. 1:11.

Thus you see that there was only one church in one city and that the seven churches of Asia, so often appealed to in apology for men's sects, were not seven sects in one town, but God's one community located in seven cities. There is, we repeat, not a single instance in the New Testament of more than one church of God in one place or city; not one case where the word "churches" does not mean a plurality of locations, and not a plurality of denominations. Indeed, according to every characteristic of the divine church, she is but one body in heaven and on earth, composed of all those who are saved; and but one in her manifestation in any one place, composed of all in that place who are saved in Christ Jesus. And though under the apostasy there are today many bodies, many towering steeples and rival altars in every city, God's Word is just as true today as when writ-

ten by the inspiration of the apostles, and there is but *one body in Christ* (Rom. 12:4, 5). Yea, there is but one body universal, and but one body in Chicago, New York, or in any other city on earth. Therefore, if "God be true and every man a liar," it follows that the multitude of ecclesiastical bodies seen in these last days are not in Christ, not the one body of Christ. However, we admit that individuals who, through erroneous education, dwell in these manifold factions, and also sincerely abide in Christ, are in the one body of Christ, notwithstanding their sect relation. This, however, they are always ready to abandon when they properly discern the divine body into which God set them and the rival character of the sect into which they were taken by man. The church of God is one in heaven and on earth; hence she is necessarily one holy family wherever she appears on earth.

OF THE CHURCH.

We have just seen that God's church is one fold, one family, one body. We shall next prove from the Scriptures that her divine author demands perfect harmony in all her members, has fully provided for that unity, and forbids all

divisions. Not only is the community of God one body, but all divisions of that one body are condemned in the strongest terms. Let us hear the great Founder, as he pours out his heart in prayer to the Father, while already suffering the inward pains of death in behalf of his dearly purchased church: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one." John 17:11. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Verses 20, 21. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Verse 23.

Three times he earnestly prays that all who believe on him through the apostles' word should be one, yea, one even as he himself and the Father are one. Are we Christians if we respect not those deep heart-yearnings of Christ? Do we care for the salvation of this lost world if we are indifferent about this heav-

enly unity, which the "wisdom of God" foresaw and declared essential to their faith in the divine mission of Christ on earth? The Lord knew very well that the citadel of the human soul is under the control of reason and can admit nothing without the consent of that high functionary. He also perceived that reason must pronounce division, discord, strife, and confusion inconsistent with a religion declared to emanate from God. Hence that earnest and thrice repeated prayer that we should all be one as he and the Father are one, so that the world might believe that he was really sent from heaven to save men from their sins.

The language virtually implies that if this holy unity should not be seen by the world unbelief would possess their hearts and his death on their behalf would be largely frustrated. And have not his anticipations proved sadly true? Behold, the world is today rushing on to hell; and ever since strife and division has broken the sweet "one accord" of the primitive church, the gospel has been comparatively powerless to convict of sin and the judgment, and turn the souls of men from the ways of death. There is, then, a solemn and awful weight of import-

ance connected with this divine unity. For this cause there is perhaps no one thing more frequently enjoined in the New Testament than the oneness of all believers, no evil more preemptorily forbidden than that of schisms, and no sin more strongly denounced than that of causing division.

The apostles of the Lord, walking in the spirit and footsteps of their Master, continued the same earnest appeal for the unity of all who profess the name of Christ. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1:10. "For ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." Phil. 1:27. "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Phil. 2:2. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you

to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 15:5, 6. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." Acts 4:32.

Here are five more strong texts on unity. In the first the children of God are exhorted to be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"; in the third, to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel"; in the fourth, to "be like-minded," "being of one accord" — not like-minded according to some man's mind or creed, not according to the mind of the flesh nor yet the edicts of some conference of preachers, but "like-minded one to another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God." An earnest admonition is, "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." For a refutation of the false statement that people can not see alike, for the confirmation of the Word and grace of God, and for the encouragement of God's saints

in all subsequent time, it is recorded that "the *multitude* of them that believed, were of one heart and one soul." Not simply a few were enabled to come into this unity for which Christ prayed, but the whole multitude of believers, and they numbered thousands. Now, we confidently affirm that the same salvation will produce the same fruits today.

Not only did the apostles follow their teacher and Lord in demanding perfect unity in all believers, but they also showed a holy abhorrence of all divisions. Accordingly, we are told that "God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body" (1 Cor. 12:24, 25). Here is a direct prohibition of all schisms, or divisions, in the body of Christ. By the standard of truth all divisions among Christians are sinful. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Rom. 16:17, 18. "A man that is an

heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Tit. 3:10, 11. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." 2 Pet. 2:1-3.

The foregoing texts, it will be observed, classify together as all the same "a man that causes divisions," "a heretic," and such as bring in heresies. And now we shall prove the position correct. The word *hairesis* is a Greek term, found ten times in the New Testament. In the following instances the word is rendered sect: Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5; 26:5; and 28:22. In the first, second, and fourth instances it is applied to the sect of the Pharisees. In the third and fifth, the Jews, ignorant of the true and

universal character of God's church, called it a sect, the sect of the Nazarenes. As the disciples were nearly all from the Jewish nation, they were very naturally looked upon as another sect of that nation. In all these instances it is clearly seen that *hairesis* is correctly rendered "sect," which signifies a faction.

There are five more instances of *hairesis* in the Greek New Testament. In these the word is not, we may say, translated at all, but merely transferred with a slight change of form into "heresy" and "heretic." They are the following: Acts 24:14; 1 Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20; 2 Pet. 2:1; and Tit. 3:10. In the last the word is *hairetekos,* referring to the sectarian instead of the sect. The word in Acts—"after the way which they call *heresy*"—is translated "sect" by Rotherham, Wakefield, A. Layman, Chas. Thomson, H. T. Anderson, Bible Union, Emphatic Diaglott, Young, and the New Version. In 1 Cor. 11:19—"for there must also be *heresies* among you"—the word is rendered "sects" by Thomson, Anderson, Bible Union, and Young; "parties" by Rotherham; "factions" by Emphatic Diaglott. In the passage in Gal. 5:20 the word for "heresies" is rendered "sects" by

Thomson, Anderson, Bible Union, and Young; "parties" by Rotherham; "factions" by Diaglott; "divisions" by the New Version. The word for "heresies" in 2 Peter 2 is translated "sects" by Layman, Thomson, Anderson, and Young; "parties" by Rotherham; "factions" by Bible Union. The word for "heretic" in Tit. 3:10 is translated as follows: "A man that causes divisions."—Bible Union. "A fomenter of divisions."—Wakefield. "A party man."—Rotherham. "A sectary."—Anderson. "A sectarian man."—Young.

So, then, it is clearly seen that a heresy is a "sect," "faction," "party," or "division"; while a heretic is "a man that causes divisions," foments sects; or he may be simply a "party man," namely, one that holds to, and is zealous for, a sect or party, or, in plain words, as rendered in the excellent translations of Robert Young, of Edinburgh, Scotland, "a sectarian man." So utterly abhorrent in its nature and ruinous in its fruits is the sin of partyism or sectarianism, that God's true children are commanded to reject any one who is guilty of it after the first and second admonition—"knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sin-

neth, being condemned of himself." All these translations, even more clearly than the Common Version, prove that there is no sin more utterly abominated by the Word of God than that of sectarianism. Paul declared the Corinthians carnal, because inclined to be sectish, one saying, "I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos." 1 Cor. 3:1-4.

In Gal. 5:20 the word for "heresies" is translated in plain English "sects"; in several other versions the apostle pronounces them "the works of the flesh," and classifies them with adultery, fornication, idolatry, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like. It is an awful fact, but the Inspired Volume mentions no sin that is more hateful in the sight of God; and it can not be denied that sects are classified with the very darkest crimes. There must, therefore, be a way to escape this sin and the judgments of God that will be visited upon such as are guilty of it. The dreadful evil is surely not an unavoidable one. The very fact that God renounces it and commands us to reject and withdraw ourselves from sectarians proves that there is a foundation upon which we may stand clear. Let us see if we can find it. In the very

prayer in which Christ so earnestly and repeatedly besought the perfect unity of all his disciples, and all who would subsequently believe on him, we find him laying down the

COMPLETE BASIS OF ONENESS.

1. *Not of the world.* "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "The men which thou gavest me out of the world." John 17:6, 14. Here is the very first condition of entering into the required unity. This world is all cursed and confused by the malady of sin. The fall of the race not only separated between man and God, but also broke the human family into fragments, bringing hatred and strife into men's hearts. Jesus, however came into the world and wrought a new creation. In it are peace, unity, and harmony. But no man can enter the new creation and still abide in the old. Hence it is no marvel that the mass of sectarians, who conform to the world in pride, love the world in covetousness, and run with the world in all its popular amusements and abominations, persistently cry:

> We must agree to disagree;
> We mortals can not hope to see
> The Word of God just all the same,
> Until we reach a higher plane.

Certainly not; but they need not wait for the future to bring the higher state. Let them repent of their sins, deny themselves of the lusts of the flesh, and be saved out of this world by the transforming grace of God; then shall they have met the first conditions of discipleship and also the first conditions of oneness. But in coming out of the old world of sin into what shall we enter and abide?

2. *In Christ alone.* "That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be *one in us.*" Verse 21. This is an important condition and basis of oneness. We can not hope to be one in any earth-born association, but we can and must be one in God and in Christ. They put darkness for light and light for darkness, who talk of joining some sect in order to be united. Every sect is a schism, and to join one is to partake of the sin of division, which is, as we have seen, extremely hateful in the sight of God. Of course, many have joined sects ignorantly, not discriminating between the church which is of God, and the sect which is of man; and our compassionate High Priest shows mercy to those who unwittingly go out of the way, provided they are only

willing to walk in the light when it shines unto them. If, then, we are to be one in Christ Jesus, they who are saved out of the world unto him and abide in him, walking in all his truth and not allowing themselves to be enticed into anything else—these stand upon the divinely appointed foundation of unity and are free from the great transgression of schism. On the contrary, whoever professes the name of Christ and yet wilfully enters anything besides the church of the Lord Jesus, will have to answer for the sin of division. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: *for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*" Gal. 3:28. "So we being many are one *body in Christ.* Rom. 12:5.

What excuse, then, is there for division? There is salvation in no other than Christ, and "ye are complete in him"—completely saved, completely kept, completely supplied, and completely unified. Since, therefore, we are commanded to "abide in him" and in him we have all grace, peace, and wisdom, oneness, happiness, and holiness, what but the will of the flesh and of the devil can lead men to join themselves to anything else?

Says the devotee of sects, "It is utterly impossible for any one to bring the whole Christian body to this way of thinking." That is all true, and it accounts for the fact that every human institution has failed to unite all Christians upon the platform of its creed; but with all this admitted, there still remains no excuse for divisions. Man's inability does not overthrow God's ability. It still remains true that the Lord Jesus Christ "is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21). It was not man but Christ who "made both one [i. e., Jews and Gentiles], and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us (Eph. 2:14). The same salvation would utterly break down and sweep out of existence every sectarian wall of modern times. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." He who, by his transforming grace, wrought this beautiful effect at the beginning of his heavenly kingdom on earth is able to give all who truly submit themselves to him the same "one mind" today; and, indeed, we shall show, in its proper place, that just now the Lord is gathering his holy bride from every ism under heaven into his own body and fulfilling proph-

ecy in giving them "one heart and one way." It is God's own doings, and man's inability has nothing to do with it. The work of unifying the children of God is no more the work of man than is our salvation. We are all one in Christ Jesus.

3. *The name.* The third provision of our oneness in the prayer of Christ was his fulfilment of the prediction of Isa. 62:2: "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Here is a clear prophecy of the transition from the first to the second covenant; from the Israel that was born after the flesh and was of the one nation to the Israel that is born of the Spirit out of all nations. The Jews as a nation rejected Christ, and the kingdom of heaven was open to the Gentiles. An entirely new order was then enacted, and old things passed away. The people (church) of God under the new covenant received a new name, which was given by the mouth of the Lord. The same thing is again spoken of in Isaiah 65. In verse 12 is an awful picture of the destruction of the Jews. "Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because

when I called, ye did not answer." "And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name." Verse 15. These scriptures were fulfilled when the Lord Jesus said, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world." "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name." John 17: 6, 12.

While men foolishly affirm that there is nothing in a name, the Lord God attaches importance enough to the naming of his church to constitute it a matter of prophesy. He excluded all men's attempts at naming it by preannouncing that it should be "named by the mouth of the Lord." There are many reasons why the naming of the church is a matter of vital importance. One object, however, is sufficient to speak of here. Thus prayed the Man of Sorrows, "Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me that they may be one, even as we are." Verse 11, New Version. The word rendered "through" in the Common Version is *en* in the Greek, and is the same word that is regularly translated *in* throughout the New Testament. Of the twelve translations that are before the

writer all except the Common Version render it, "Keep in thy name." Christ fulfilled the prophecy by manifesting the name of God to be the basis of the church title, and prayed the Father to keep the disciples in his name, that they might be one as he and the Father are one. Therefore, even in the name, perfect unity is provided for. The entire church is to be kept in the one name, as a means of its perfect oneness.

Though other names are not the chief cause of divisions, but more generally have come into use because the divisions have been fomented by some factious spirit or false doctrine, yet, nevertheless, party names have contributed their share to the making of sects. To say that rival names do not help to divide and to perpetuate division is to charge Christ with nonsense; for why did he pray the Father to keep the disciples in his name, in order that they should be one, if they would have been one just the same under various names? In other words, if oneness in name is not essential to oneness in faith, life, and spirit, why did the Savior pray for the former as a condition of the latter? We admit that sincere, humble children of God may

mutually cherish much love and enjoy some fellowship with each other while under sectish names; but such names are inconsistent with Bible unity, prevent its manifestation to the world, and become a wedge in the hands of Satan to separate and alienate. Yea, it is a fact clearly seen by spiritual men, that sect names are real idols that men worship and are exceedingly mad upon. But Christ has left no excuse for these names. In giving the one name for the church to be known by, he provides for her unity and condemns all divisions.

"Keep them in thy name." The holy apostles held this prayer of their Lord in profound respect. Let us see how they understood and carried it out. "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. "The church of God which is at Corinth." 1 Cor. 1:2 and 2 Cor. 1:1. "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." 1 Cor. 10:32. "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God." 1 Cor. 11:16. "Despise ye the church of God?" 1 Cor. 11:22. "I persecuted the church of God." 1 Cor. 15:9. "Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and

wasted it." Gal. 1:13. "For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus." 1 Thess. 2:14. "We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God." 2 Thess. 1:4. "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" 1 Tim. 3:5. "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." 1 Tim. 3:15.

The word "church" frequently occurs without the qualifying part of the name; because, there being only one church that is of God, it was not necessary to designate it every time by its full name. But that men should not give some appellation of their own to the divine community, we find it twelve times denominated "the church of God," according to the prayer of the Savior that it should be kept in the name of God, the Father. And lest men should ascribe this heavenly Jerusalem to some earthly god, it is once qualified in full—"The church of the living God." This excludes all dead fraternities of the dead gods of the nations.

The name chosen by divine wisdom beautifully acknowledges the various relations of the

church to God. To her it is said, "Thy maker is thy husband." Is it not proper and right that the heavenly bride should honor her husband by assuming his name? Again, the church is the family of God; she therefore naturally inherits the name of the Father. Because of both these relations, to assume any other name is to insult the jealous God, who will not give his glory to another. "For this cause," says the apostle, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; of [from] whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. 3:14, 15. We have seen that the name was given by the mouth of the Lord Jesus, but was derived from the Father. This latter fact is clearly seen in the above passage when correctly rendered; for the Greek preposition *ez* is defined the same as *ek,* and signifies, from, out of. Hence it expresses the source or derivation of the name. It is rendered "from" in the Emphatic Diaglott: "For this cause I bend my knees to the Father, *from whom* the whole family in the heavens and on earth is named." Thus also seven out of the twelve versions render it. We should also observe that this title, "The church of God," acknowledges God as its founder,

builder, and owner. It, therefore, not only lays an important foundation for the unity of all believers under the one and only Scriptural church cognomen, but also honors God as its author and possessor. Is there, then, no difference in a name? Would a title that does not indicate whether the church originated from, and belongs to, God, man, or the devil, do equal honor to God with that which ascribes it wholly to him?

The glorious institution that Jesus founded is a complete organization. Now, nothing could well take on regular organic form without designating its name. Therefore about the first clause of every constitution of earthly organizations, reads somewhat as follows: "This society [corporation or joint stock company, etc] shall be known by the name of," etc. So when Jesus, the Son of God, founded his heavenly Jerusalem on earth, he put on record that this holy community should be kept in the name of the Father, and the apostles were inspired to word the name thus: "The *ekklesia* of God." In this one name her oneness is to be maintained. Whoever, therefore, imposes or assumes any other church title is not only guilty of disobeying the

earnest desire of Christ, but also guilty of creating or partaking of the enormous sin of schism. This is a matter of no small weight in the sight of God.

4. *The discipline.* The fourth plank in the divine basis of oneness is the inspired discipline that the head of the church gave for its government. The Lord Jesus forever cut off all excuse for his professed disciples to usurp the headship of his church by presuming to make laws and regulations for their own government. In the very prayer that pleads for their perfect unity he says, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:4. By reference to Deut. 18:15-19 it is seen that one thing the Father required of him was to speak unto the people all his new-covenant law. This he had therefore done. Yea, he saith, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." "I have given them thy word." John 17:8, 14.

Having already shown the perfection and the infallibility of this divinely authorized discipline, we call attention to it here merely to show that nothing essential to the foundation of perfect unity is unsupplied. Had the founder of

the church of God left her without a creed or system of cooperation, it might have been taken for granted that men were left at liberty to draft such rules and regulations as they thought best. In this case there would have been an excuse for different creeds and for the resultant divisions. But Jesus has forever excluded all who would be lawmakers in the kingdom of heaven.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4:4-6. What a beautiful picture of perfect unity! There is but one body, therefore to start another is to go out of the one; one Spirit, hence to admit another is to give place to the devil. There is one Lord; this ignores all the ecclesiastical lords and high officials that resolve themselves into a rival head and announce themselves "the law-making power of the church." "One faith"—the faith once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). By whom was it given? "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it." Psa. 68:11. This clearly defines the pre-

rogative both of Christ and of all his ministers. As head of the body, he issues all laws. As simple messengers of the Lord, his ministers deliver and enforce his Word, without adding thereto or taking therefrom one jot or tittle. How utterly different the province of ministerial duty as portrayed in the Word of God from that disgusting, God-dishonoring scheme of general and annual conferences and assemblies of modern sectarians, wherein men usurp the office of Christ, the "one lawgiver"!

There is "one faith, one baptism"; that is, the one faith of the gospel is publicly professed in the one literal ordinance of baptism. Hence when Satan infused party spirits into the disciples at Corinth, the apostle Paul reproved them by three questions: "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" 1 Cor. 1:13. The idea is this: Christ is not divided; he only was crucified for them; and they all received the same ordinance of baptism. They could not be divided without going out of Christ and inventing a different baptism. Therefore it has come to pass that the modern factions "deny the Lord that bought them" and substitute the sacra-

ments of Rome for the ordinances of Christ, especially that wherein we testify our death to sin by burial with Christ in baptism. The Lord having given the same rule for all his disciples to walk by, and the Holy Spirit to guide each one into a knowledge of all this divine system of truth, there is here, again, no possible excuse for division. Neither Christ, his Spirit, nor yet his Word causes divisions. These are all the result of carnality and of subscribing to some tradition or creed of man. He, therefore, that subscribes to anything else than the inspired Word is guilty of the sin of division in the sight of Him who has made all provision for unity.

5. *Sanctification.* We now come to the great condition and all-potent means of perfect unity. In the very midst of his quadruple prayer that we should be "one as he and the Father are one," he thus implores the Father: "*Sanctify* them through thy truth: thy word is truth. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." John 17:17, 19. Here, we say, is secured to us the essential and all-sufficient means of producing perfect unity in all the body of Christ. First

we will trace the blessed cause and effect in its negative virtues. In 1 Cor. 3:3 and Gal. 5:19, 20, we see that factions, or heresies, are the works of the flesh, the fruits of the carnal mind. Entire sanctification destroys all divisions by removing the cause; for it cleanses the heart from all unrighteousness. But there is a positive part to this sanctifying work of grace; namely, the infilling of the Holy Spirit; the return of Christ from heaven in the power of the Comforter, bringing with him the Father. Thus his sanctified temples are filled "with all the fulness of God." The perfect cleansing feature of the sanctifying grace removes all carnality, which is the cause of division, and the all-pervading love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, brings all hearts into the same harmony that reigns in heaven, into perfect unity, as the Father and Son are one.

This is expressed in these words: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." John 17:22, 23. The

glory which he has given to the church and which makes us one as he and the Father, he thus defines: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." The unifying glory is the indwelling God; for "the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (Isa. 60:19). In Luke 2:32 Christ is declared to be, "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." And again, we read, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 1 Pet. 4:14. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit constitute the excellent glory that Jesus bequeathed to his church. Who dare say that this divine fulness is unable to produce the effect Christ said it would?

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18. From "glory to glory" we receive the glory of the very image of Christ; namely, from the glory of justification into the glory of entire sanctification. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord,

because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. 2:13, 14. This very clearly shows that the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ is the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. For our sanctification is "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This glory makes us all one as the Father and his Son. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 2:10, 11. Here again the glory and the grace of entire sanctification are spoken of as the same, and perfect oneness is its sure fruit. Christ and all that are wholly sanctified by him are of one, yea, of one Spirit, of one mind, of one faith, of one heart and soul, and all in "one body," of which he is the head, and we are members in particular. If, therefore, Christ and his apostle

tell us the truth, we are forced to the conclusion that all who are not thus made one, and who yet plead for sects, are not sanctified, not in possession of the glory.

But let us hear the testimony of the Word once more: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4: 11-13. Here again this beautiful fruit of perfected holiness is recorded; namely, unity. The various gifts of the ministerial calling are all given of God, and all center in the paramount object of the perfection of the saints, in which experience they "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man," a perfect body. Christ "made of twain [Jews and Gentiles] one new man," a new church; and, thank God, he has provided for the perfect holiness and unity of this church of the new covenant. The perfection of the saints is attained

in entire sanctification (Heb. 10:14), and "the unity of the faith" is its inevitable fruit. The language implies two things: first, they are all brought into the one faith, the faith once for all delivered to the saints; second, they are not left in various and conflicting views and interpretations of the one faith. Nay, the "unity of the faith" implies one faith and a perfect uniformity in the understanding of that faith.

So we plant our feet on the sure Word of God and by its authority affirm that God has made full provision, in every respect, for the perfect harmony in faith, life, and teaching of all who honestly wish to know the truth and obey the same. Therefore perfect unity is a law and characteristic of God's church in its normal condition.

But before we pass from this point, we must expose the perverse reasonings of modern heretics. In one strain of logic they affirm that it is all right for the Christian world to be divided into so many different shades of belief and to have such a variety of church organization; that thereby the gospel has been more extensively spread and more people evangelized, because everybody can find a church to suit him. And

when the Word of God is brought forward to show that all God's people should be one, they seek to cover the enormous sin of schisms by saying, "All God's people are one." Now while it must be admitted that in the hearts of all who possess any degree of saving grace there is a measure of inward fellowship and a tendency to draw together, it is equally true that there is such a thing as the sin of division. Had not Christ seen that it was possible for divisions to be brought in among his disciples, he would not have so earnestly prayed that they should all be one. It is also true that although there are men and women in the various organized divisions who have passed from death unto life, they can only "*live at a poor dying rate*" while they are fenced apart by the party names and creeds. As we have said, the tendency of all who profess any measure of the love of God is to draw together and assemble together; but this very inward bent of the Spirit of God is denied this course by the control of party interests and party lords. And so the Spirit, grieved and hindered, gradually dies out of the heart, and the sectarian spirit only is left to animate the profession.

So, then, be it understood (1) that perfect unity is the order of God's church and his will in all that believe; (2) that disciples of Christ may be in a scattered condition in sects, and are in all the Protestant sects, so far as real Christians compose their membership; (3) that where separations of any kind are brought in between truly converted men, the church is not in the normal state, and spiritual death must sooner or later ensue to the body thus disintegrated; and (4) that the forming of sects, or the organizing of divisions, both destroys the church and prevents the salvation of the world.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

The church of God contains all true believers. As salvation constitutes us members of it, all the saved are its members. No one can be a Christian outside of the divine church. The church is the body of Christ, and the body of Christ includes all the redeemed in heaven and earth.

This is one of the principal distinguishing features between the true church and the false, between the divine ecclesia and man-made institutions. This one truth, the catholicity of the

church of God, locates every sect. The church of God includes the family of God, and it is but one family in heaven and on earth; therefore it includes in its membership every Christian, all the redeemed in paradise and all the saved on earth. Including all Christians, it is not a sect, but is the whole. Now, a church that does not include in its membership all Christians in heaven and earth can n o t be God's church, and hence it is a sect. All the religious denominations taken together come far short of including all Christians. Before any of these institutions arose, there were millions of Christians. None of the blood-washed saints in paradise are now members of any of these earth-born institutions; and right here upon earth there are tens of thousands of happy saints in robes of righteousness who have come out and stand clear of creed-bound churches, and there are many thousands of others who are saved from sin and have never joined any of them. Therefore all denominations put together, both Roman, Greek, and Protestant, do not constitute the universal church, but are only sects.

In holding membership in the one universal church and in no other, we stand clear of the

sin of division; are members of no sect, but members of that church to which all the saved in heaven and earth belong. This is the one and only catholic church. The church of Rome has long laid claim to the title "Catholic church," but in doing so they have assumed a title that does not belong to them. They are a sect—a sect, too, that includes very few real Christians. The church of God is catholic not only in that it includes all Christians, but also in that it is destined to fill the whole earth. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." Dan. 7:27. "And the stone which smote the image upon the feet became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2:35. These texts have direct reference to the universality of the church of God.

Moreover, the religion of the church of God will apply to all men of all nations. The church of God gathers into her fold the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, the high and the low—in short, all classes of all men. These, when saved, are on one common level of equality. Many of the religions of the world

are local in their nature and apply only to certain classes. These have adopted peculiar customs, manners, and styles of dress. But Christianity, the religion of the church of God is not local in any sense. It is the one universal religion, the one religion that will apply to all classes of men. It imposes no peculiar customs, manners, or dress. Thus we see again the catholicity of the church of God.

THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF THE CHURCH.

The use of the term "exclusiveness" conveys the idea that all who are not in the church that Jesus founded are excluded from salvation and the Christian's hope. If any person is not disposed to comply with the conditions of membership in God's church, he can turn aside and join some church that presents a wider door, but he can not thus obtain salvation. There is but one Savior of all men. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Those who are saved by him are baptized, or inducted, by one Spirit into one body; so all who are outside of this one body are excluded from the grace of God.

Christ is an exclusive Christ. There is no other besides him. God is an exclusive God. He says, "I know no other." There was a time when certain people tried to compel Jehovah to fellowship and acknowledge their gods. For instance, the Philistines placed the ark of God in the house of Dagon, but Dagon could not stand before the God of heaven. The next morning when the Philistines went to their temple they found Dagon fallen down before the Lord. They set him up in his place, but the following morning he was again fallen down, and nothing was left of him but a stump. This shows that God is an exclusive God. He acknowledges no other God. In order, then, to honor God we must reject all other gods and worship the Lord of heaven alone. There is but one Holy Spirit. The world today is filled with spirits, but in the midst of them all there is but one true Spirit of God, and in order to keep clear in our souls we must reject every other spirit. The faith that Christ gave us is an exclusive faith. No other saves the soul. The truth of God is exclusive in its nature. Everything contrary to it is false. The kingdom of Christ is exclusive. It is a stone that breaks everything else to

pieces. The only church that Jesus founded and named is also exclusive, for there is only one body in Christ.

During the reign of pagan persecution the rulers offered to stop the bloody martyrdom and allow the Christians to worship God in freedom if they would concede that the pagan idols also were real gods. This they could not do, but chose rather to die. It is this very point of exclusiveness that is the present offense of the cross. People would not seriously object to our setting forth God's church as described in the Scriptures if we would only recognize their earth-founded institutions as being also God's churches; but this we can not do and be honest before God and faithful to his Word. There is one household of faith. Christ does not have a plurality of wives. He has but one bride, and she has no sisters. "My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother." S. of Sol. 6:9. It is true that there is in these last days a sisterhood of Christian bodies calling themselves churches, but the Lamb's wife knows no kin to them. They are an entirely different family. Their mother is Mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots. As God is one,

only one religion can emanate from him. As God is not the author of confusion, his church can not be split into a confused lot of rival institutions. He recognizes no sisterhood of churches. If, therefore, there is but one church that emanates from God, whence come the rest? Martin Luther would answer, "Whatever is not of God is of the devil." Men come to us and say just what the devils besought of Christ—"'Let us alone.' Go and preach what you believe, but let everybody else alone." This is great blindness. If the true God would reign, Dagon and all other gods must fall down and have their heads broken off. If Christ be lifted up, Antichrist must be demolished. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness can not jointly flourish nor even coexist in the same heart. As the coming of light must dispel darkness, and the preaching of the truth must vanquish error; so the church of the living God must utterly exclude and antagonize every counterfeit church. Hence in the present evening light, which reveals the true fold, "every founder is confounded by the graven image; for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors:

in the time of their visitation they shall perish" (Jer. 10:14). That time is now come, for the preaching of the pillar and ground of the truth demolishes the work of error.

God's church is exclusive like himself; and he who is not willing to commit himself exclusively to God and the church that Jesus purchased with his own blood, but for the friendship of the world and of the masses of sectarians enters the great wicked Babel of isms and by so doing avoids persecutions, is not fit for the kingdom. Though men have held a place both in God's church and in man's sects through ignorance, yet when the true light comes, they must cut loose from one or the other. If they then refuse to walk in the light, they will go into spiritual darkness.

The spirit of this age is to place Christ and Belial on an equality—to call everything that has a name to be religious God's church, and thus try to palm off upon the Almighty the corrupt works of the devil and insult his holiness by classifying with his heaven-born church all the hypocrites and abominable characters taken into the false branches of Babylon; but "the Lord knoweth them that are his."

The great congress of all religions held in 1893 in Chicago at the World's Fair was a perfect selling out of Christ. The representatives gathered in that congress claimed to meet in one common brotherhood, thus forcing fellowship between light and darkness, Christ and Belial, God and idols, heaven and hell. Heathen idolaters, Shintoists and worshipers of all the ridiculous gods that Satan has invented met on one common level as one great family—an act which virtually denied the exclusiveness of the God of the Bible and placed God on the level with heathen idols. This, we say, was a slander on the name of Christ and wicked blasphemy in the sight of God. It virtually proves that Roman and Protestant Babylon have left God and gone over to the gods of Baal; for surely Christ is separate from all such, and the God of the Bible is the only God, his church is the only true and safe fold, and the faith of Christ is alone from heaven.

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH.

This is the one all-important and absolutely essential attribute of the divine church. Before God put forth the first creative act in the forma-

tion of this world, he determined that its inhabitants should be holy. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:4. For this reason he created man in his own image—in his own moral likeness. And this image of God in which man was created and to which he is restored by the all-transforming and sanctifying grace of God is "righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:23). "After God" must mean after the original pattern in which man was created—after the moral likeness of his own Maker, which is defined as "righteousness and true holiness." Col. 3:9, 10, leaves us no shadow of a doubt that this original God-likeness, from which we have the word "godliness," is restored to the soul of man here in this life: "Seeing that ye have put off the old man [evil nature] with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which *is renewed* in knowledge *after the image of him that created him.*" Here we see that salvation in the second Adam brings back the holy image of God that man lost by sin in the first Adam.

This moral perfection in man is essential to

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the very object of his being. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." Lev. 19:1, 2. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. Can any thoughtful mind read these words without receiving the impression that God created man to enjoy the blessing of fellowship and companionship with him? to enjoy the society of God and to be a "worker together with him" in carrying forward his beneficent plans? The imperative command is, "Be ye holy"; and the one great and all-sufficient reason for the injunction is, "Because I the Lord your God am holy." The import of the reason is this: Man was created to walk with God. God being holy, man also must be holy; otherwise there can be no affinity between God and man, no adaptation to each other's society. Therefore when our first parents by sin lost their holiness of heart, the image of God, they were spoiled for his heavenly society. They dreaded his approach, and hid with fear and trembling when

they heard his voice. They having now become unholy, his holiness drove them out from his presence. And let it here be considered that as heaven is filled with the holiness and presence of God, it is the utmost folly and delusion to cherish a hope of entering into its ineffable glory unless one is made perfect and spotless in holiness before God. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"; but "blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

For this great object was the church established here on earth. She is the mountain of God's own holiness, and her plane of moral perfection is the plane of heaven. She is all one "family in heaven and earth," so that all who are in fellowship with her are in fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3), and are consequently fitted for the enjoyment of all the holy society of heaven. The church of the living God is paradise restored on earth, a "new creation." No person can enter it except through salvation from all sin, and no person can remain in the church after he ceases to be holy, any more than Adam and Eve could remain in Eden after they had

become corrupted by sin. As their own sin made the presence of God unendurable and necessarily drove them out, so "every branch in Christ that bringeth not forth good fruit, the Father taketh away." There are, then, no unholy branches in the Christ-vine. "For if the first-fruit [Christ] be holy; . . . so are the branches." Rom. 11:16.

Persons belonging to the different religious organizations that men have founded, it is said, *ought* to be holy; but all the members of God's church *are* holy. When members of a modern sect are judged unworthy of membership, it is in the power of its rulers, by some course prescribed in their discipline, to expel such; but when men become unfit to dwell in the body of Christ, they thereby forfeit their membership, and, so to speak, expel themselves. God's church is self-adjusting. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." "He that committeth sin is of the devil." 1 John 3:6, 8. By the act of sinning he transfers himself from the family of God to the family of Satan. "As the root is holy, so are also the branches." Therefore the unholy are not branches at all.

The chief end of man's existence is to wor-

ship the Lord. But how must a holy God be worshiped? Answer: "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Psa. 29:2. "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before him all the earth." Psa. 96:9. The same in substance is required by the Savior in the absolute demand, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." Since God's church is on the plane of spiritual worship to God, it is holy in his sight.

The church is also seen to be holy unto God because he walks in the midst of her. 'Where two or three meet in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' 'And I will manifest myself unto you as I do not unto the world.' These and similar statements show a social communion between God and his people in the new Jerusalem, which is the church of the first-born; and holiness is just as essential now to the enjoyment of the society of God as it was when its loss drove Adam and Eve from his presence.

But still more strikingly does the holiness of God's church on earth appear when we consider it as the actual dwelling-place of God. "In whom ye also are builded together for a habi-

tation of God through the Spirit." "As God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them." Can any person conceive of God dwelling in any other than a holy temple? Nay, "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. 3:17. Neither can a few unholy ones pass under cover of the general holiness of others. Had there been a thousand holy men in Eden, they would have intensified rather than decreased the fire of God's holy presence and would have made the place all the more unendurable to the sinner. So no hypocrite can smuggle himself into the awful temple of God's presence. To the unholy "God is a consuming fire." "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Psa. 1:5. There never was nor ever can be a sinner or unholy person in the church, which is the body of Christ. Such characters may and do assemble with the church, and may seek to pass for members of the body, and where the church is deficient in discerning, such may actually pass undetected, but they are not in the church.

The foregoing is apparent when we consider what constitutes membership in any society.

First, the conditions and process of becoming a member must be met; and, secondly, the name must be entered on the roll of membership. Therefore the class-book of any sect decides who are and who are not its members. No matter how much a man may affirm his membership, if his name is not recorded in the class-book, his claim is false; and no difference how vile a character may be, if his name stands on the book, he is a member, even though the society be ashamed to confess the fact. Now, it is by these same two tests that we define membership in God's church. First, all must enter through Christ, the only door, and by the process of salvation (John 10:9; Eph. 2:18); for there is no other possible admittance. Second, he must have his name in the Lamb's book of life; for there is no other enrollment of the names of all the household of God. Thus no one can enter except by obtaining salvation, and all that are thus born of God do not commit sin, but are "holy brethren"; and, furthermore, no sinner or hypocrite has deceived God and got his name written down in heaven, and whosoever commits sin and does not continue to overcome, that man's name is blotted out of the book

of life. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Ex. 32:33); but "he that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." Rev. 3:5. There are, then, no sinners' names continued on the book of God's church, nor names of any who have been overcome by the devil or any evil agent. There is not an unholy member in the church of God. She is a "spiritual house, an *holy priesthood,*" "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an *holy nation,* a peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). Yea, saith her Lord, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." S. of Sol. 4:7.

UNCHANGEABLENESS OF THE CHURCH.

Though great and popular counterfeits of the church have been formed on earth, which are very mutable in all their elements; though it is true that the real membership of God's church may increase and decrease in numbers, and that during the middle ages the saints were trodden down and so worn-out by the persecuting powers of darkness that but few remained on earth to keep alive the holy seed; yea, and though it

is also true that nearly all the doctrines and principles of the church of the living God were trodden under foot by the adversary and almost entirely hidden beneath the traditions and the inventions of men, yet it still remains true that every doctrinal element of the divine structure is eternal and unchangeable. Many factious bodies have arisen since Christ purchased and founded his holy community, but "the portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things" (Jer. 51:19). The fold of Christ is the same thing on earth today that she was before the first "molten image" of sectism was evolved from strife and spiritual ignorance. We have seen that God is the builder and maker of the church; and the wise man says, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." Eccl. 3:14:15. It looks, indeed, as if these words were placed on record to rebuke all the founders of new sects and inventors of new creeds, and also to vindicate the unchangeable church of God.

The law of Moses was given for a temporal purpose and for a limited time. "It was added because of transgressions [to restrain sinful deeds], till the seed should come." Gal. 3:19. That seed is Christ (verse 16). So the law system was to remain only until Christ should come, and it was supplanted by the new covenant, the law of Christ. While it was in force, however, no man could set it aside, add to it, or take from it. But the Christian system constitutes the law of the kingdom of God, which shall "stand forever"; therefore it "shall be forever." An attempt to change one word of it is sure death to the soul. Even the pope, with all his boasted power, is unable to change the eternal laws of the kingdom of heaven, though he shall "think to change times and laws" (Dan. 7:25). No power short of the throne of God can change one thing in the divine church.

The same self-denial, and repentance, and utter forsaking of all sin, that were conditions of entering the church at the beginning must be met today. The same experience of entire sanctification and holy character demanded then is yet required and fully provided for in God's

church. "No man can serve two masters" now any more than when Christ uttered the saying. Although Satan has deceived the mass of sectarian professors into the false belief that they can serve sin and Christ right along together—sin daily in word, thought, and deed, and yet be Christians—but the Book has not changed, and it is still true that "he that committeth sin is of the devil." The same purity, unity, glory, power, and perfect peace, that God put in his church are yet there, though only appropriated by few men on earth. The miraculous gifts that the Lord set in the body have never been taken out. Gifts of wisdom, of knowledge, of healing, of discerning of spirits, and of casting out devils —all these are yet in the church, notwithstanding the teaching of sectarians to the contrary. Not finding these gifts in their bodies, they have taught that God has recalled such things. He has never promised to set in men's structures what he has placed in his own church. But since we have returned from Babylon to the heavenly Jerusalem, we find all the precious gifts yet remaining in it and awaiting the faith once delivered to the saints to grasp them and develop them into use. There is not one non-

essential incorporated into the Word of God, nor yet one element that was to drop out after the death of the apostles or at any subsequent time.

The inspired apostle Paul, speaking of the new-testament ordinances, said to the Corinthians, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread," etc. 1 Cor. 11:23. And in verse 2 he commanded them, saying, "Keep the ordinances, as I delivered them unto you." So God's people are not left at liberty to modify one of the ordinances in the least, much less to substitute the sprinkling rite of paganism and Romanism for the sacred ordinance of burial with Christ in baptism. How presumptuous it is to cast away one of the ordinances of Christ, as the largest portion of professors do, or all of them, as the Quakers and a few others do, taking the ridiculous position that the law of Christ met with a revision some time after the apostles died! How directly opposite to the words of Christ this falsehood! Thus we read: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he

come." And the command to baptize all who believe in Christ is incorporated in the commission which authorizes the perpetual ministry and to which is subjoined the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

So the obligation to administer the ordinance of baptism extends parallel with the commission to preach the gospel to the end of the world; and so of every element of the entire divine system. There is not a mutable factor in it. This fact is clearly established in Jude 3: "Beloved, . . . I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which *was once for all delivered* unto the saints." The verb "delivered" is in the aorist tense and therefore denotes that it was "delivered once for all," as rendered in the Revised Version and nearly all other translations. If it was delivered once for all, it is therefore unchangeable to the end of time. Even the language of the Common Version, "once delivered unto the saints," conveys that idea. So we repeat that the church as it stood in its primitive glory and unity exists unchanged today.

INDESTRUCTIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

Upon the erroneous supposition that the church which Christ built was entirely destroyed Mormonism has built her house. Her adherents maintain that the apostasy destroyed the church, that hence it became necessary for man to build another, and that under divine inspiration Joseph Smith reestablished the church of God upon earth. Now, if we can prove that the church of God has never been destroyed, but that it exists today, we shall establish the fact that all the Mormon sects are but human frauds imposed upon the people.

In Dan. 2:44 the new-testament church was prophesied of as a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, a kingdom which should never be destroyed, but should stand forever. This accords with the language of Jesus in Matt. 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." These solemn declarations of heaven's truth are sufficient to establish the fact that the church which Christ built will stand forever. If the gates of hell can not prevail against it, it is indestructible and exists today.

Yes, dear reader, that divine temple stands just as solid and firm as in days of yore. Though it has witnessed bloody scenes of martyrdom and has for centuries been largely hidden from human view by the ecclesiastical rubbish of men, yet it has never been destroyed—never. Earthly kingdoms and governments have passed away; great and mighty changes have been wrought in the earth; but the church of God has stood unshaken; and now, as the burning truth of God consumes the piles of ecclesiastical rubbish, and the glorious light of the evening-time dispels the mists and fogs of the dark and cloudy days, she appears again in her wondrous beauty and pristine glory. So shall she stand while the cycles of eternity roll.

Let us briefly view the elements that compose the church. Christ is its head (Col. 1:18), foundation (1 Cor. 3:11), door (John 10:7, 9), and governor (Isa. 9:6, 7). Its walls are salvation (Isa. 26:1); its law is the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2); its bond of union is the love of God (Col. 2:2); its membership consists of the saved of all nations. Now, to destroy the church would be to destroy its foundation, which the apostle Paul declares "standeth sure"; its

head, which is alive forever more; its door, which no man can shut; its law, which endureth forever; its walls, salvation; and all the people of God, who compose it. Since, however, there never has been a time when God did not have a people, and since all the above-named elements are eternal, the church of God is indestructible. Its walls of salvation no man can batter down.

Only one phase of the church went into apostasy, the people, and not all of them; for three million, rather than bow down and acknowledge the ungodly doctrine of popery, sealed their testimony with their own blood. The foundation, head, door, government, unity, purity, etc., of the church never went into apostasy; and in these last days when we come out of the apostasy we simply return to these primitive elements again. We come to the same Zion that Christ established in the beginning.

The church of God is a spiritual institution. "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 2:5. Its door of admission is a spiritual door. Jesus says, "I am the door. By me if

any man enter in, he shall be saved." John 10:9. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." 1 Cor. 12:13. Its foundation is spiritual. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:11. "That spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10:4.

Thus we cover every specification of the New Testament church and find it holy, divine, spiritual, and eternal; therefore it is utterly impossible for men to build an organization like it, for they can not manufacture spiritual things. This church is the finest organization the world has ever seen. It is truly worthy of God himself. It is his temple, in which he dwells; therefore there is nothing so august as the church, seeing it is the temple of God; nothing so worthy of reference, seeing God dwells in it; and nothing so solid, since Jesus only is its foundation, and it is declared to be the pillar and ground of the truth. There is nothing so closely united and indivisible, since all hearts are knit together by the perfect love of God; nothing more lofty, since it reaches higher than heaven; nothing so regular and well-proportioned, since Christ and the Holy Spirit are the archi-

tects; nothing so beautiful, since it is ornamented with Christ's holiness; nothing so brilliant, since Christ is its light; nothing so strong, since Christ is its walls and bulwarks. There is no institution so spacious since it is spread over the whole world and takes in all that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; no institution so spiritual, since all its membership are living stones, animated and inhabited by the Holy Spirit; no institution so lasting, since it is destined to stand forever. In it the poor, the wretched, and the distressed of every nation find shelter. It is the place where God does his marvelous works, for there he is to be sought and found and worshiped. Such is the church of the New Testament. She is a strong tower, into which we have run and are safe.

PERPETUITY OF THE CHURCH.

This feature of the church we have already gathered from the preceding chapter; for if the elements of the church are eternal—and it is indestructible in its very nature—then its perpetuity follows as a natural result. In Dan. 7:18 it is said, "But the saints of the Most

High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." This text teaches the fact that Christianity was to continue eternally. The same we have in Luke 1: 31, 33: "He [Jesus] shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." The kingdom and the church are in some respects identical. They are inclusive of each other. Christ established the everlasting kingdom of God, planted his church in the earth, and began his reign of righteousness and salvation in the beginning of this dispensation; and the above texts assert that his kingdom and his reign are to continue forever. Therefore the perpetuity of the church is assured.

In the Book of Revelation, chapter 12, the pure church of God is brought to view under the symbol of a woman clothed with the sun and having the moon under her feet, etc. That woman was the primitive church arrayed with the light of salvation, purity, and holiness, and with the authority and the power of Jesus Christ, her husband. Verse 6 says: "The

woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Verse 14 reads, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." This wilderness signifies the obscurity into which the true church went and in which she remained during the dark reign of apostasy. Although during the Dark Ages there were true disciples of Christ that never embraced the absurdities of the Roman church, among whom we mention the Cathri, the poor men of Lyons, the Lombards, Albigenses, Waldenses, Baudis, etc., yet "the living church retired gradually within the lonely sanctuary of a few hearts, and the external church was substituted in its place, and all its forms were declared to be of divine appointment."—D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, book I, chap. I. "There existed at that dark period, when 'all the world wondered after the beast,' a numerous body of the disciples of Christ who took the New Testament for their guidance and direction in all af-

fairs of religion, rejecting the doctrines and commandments of men. Their appeal was from the decision of councils and the authority of popes, cardinals, and prelates to the law and the testimony, the words of Christ and his apostles."—History of Romanism by Dowling, page 272.

Thus the church of God existed during the reign of popery, and in the place prepared of God she was nourished and kept alive "for a time, and times, and half a time." During this long period, however, she was largely in obscurity, symbolized by "wilderness." Though the church was largely obscured during the reign of apostasy, being hidden under the human rubbish and creeds of men, and though during the reign of Protestant sectism her members have been scattered in the various so-called Christian societies, so that really the true church has not shone forth in her visible beauty; yet she has existed, and thus has been perpetuated that true Christianity and church which Christ established in the earth; and in these last days the same church is coming up out of the wilderness and returning to the unity, purity, holiness, organization, and oneness of primitive

days. Thus is fulfilled the prophecy in Solomon's Songs 8:5: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Christ is the one who is leading her out.

So in these last days the church of God, in her gathered condition, is a visible organized body of believers, distinct and separate from all the religious bodies of human origin; and she is the same church, the bride of Christ, the identical woman that was seen in symbol (Rev. 12:1) in her primitive glory, and afterwards nourished in the wilderness, or state of obscurity, during a long period of apostasy, and now again brought back to the apostolic plane, looking fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

Figures in which the New Testament Church is Presented.

A number of figures are used in the New Testament in presenting the church of God, and by these it is brought to view in all of its different phases. The first of these that we will consider is

A BODY.

Salvation constitutes us members of the church of God, and to those who have thus been saved out of the world and sin the Lord has given certain names or titles to distinguish them from others. In the New Testament God's people are termed Christians, disciples, brethren, saints, friends, and pilgrims. Each of these terms has its special signification. We are termed Christians to signify that the people of God are like Christ—demonstrate his character, life, and disposition to men. We are termed disciples, a word which means learners, to signify that the moment we are saved we enter the school of Christ and are taught of God. We are termed pilgrims to signify that this world is not our final destiny; that we are traveling

to a better country, namely, a heavenly. We are termed friends to signify that, while at one time we were enemies and strangers, we have, through salvation, been reconciled to God and are no longer enemies, but are his friends. We are termed brethren to signify our relationship to the Lord and to each other. We are also termed saints, a word which means a holy one, to signify that all who are saved live sinless lives.

Now these saints, or Christians, who are by salvation called out from sin and the world, joined to the Lord and to one another by the bond of love and heavenly fellowship, constitute a body. Whether viewed in a universal way, as all the saved on earth gathered into the one fold of Christ and the one faith of the gospel, or in a local sense, as a body of people in any city, town, or country place, who are saved of God and assemble together to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, they constitute a body, a saved body of believers. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Rom. 12:5. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. 12:27. So God's saved

people constitute the body of Christ. This, of course, includes all the saved.

In Rom. 12:4, 5, the apostle Paul represents the church by the human body. He says, "As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we [God's people] being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Here we see that the same close relationship that exists between the members of our physical body exists between the members of the spiritual body, the church. Our physical body is a perfectly organized body. Though composed of many members, yet these members constitute but one body. Not all have the same office. The hands can not perform the work of the feet, the feet the work of the eye, the eye the work of the ear, nor the ear the work of the mouth. Yet all these members work in perfect harmony. Just so it is with the church of God. There are many members; not all have the same office. "God hath set every member in the body [the church] as it pleaseth him"—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, etc.; some to attend to spiritual affairs, and some to labor with their hands, earning the necessary means for

the spread and the support of the gospel. But while we have different offices and different work, as with the members of our physical bodies, we are all one harmonious whole, every member filling his place and every one members one of another. In the physical body, if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Just so it is in this spiritual body, the church: "whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it." There is a close affinity, a blessed relationship, existing between the members of Christ.

Having seen that the truly saved constitute a body and that this body is the body of Christ, we will now prove the same to be the church. "Who now rejoice in my suffering for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." Col. 1:24. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22, 23. The church is the body of Christ, and, being the body of Christ, it necessarily includes all the members. It follows, then, that any institution which does not constitute the

body of Christ is not the church. In order to become a member of the church we must become a member of Christ's body, and the moment we are thus made members of his body we become members of his church. As before stated, salvation constitutes us members of the body of Christ, the church. The moment an individual is saved that moment he becomes a church-member. If in India or Africa a heathen who has never met a Christian, but who has received a copy of the New Testament, becomes convicted of sin through reading the gospel, and repents, and meets every required condition for salvation, the instant that heathen man is converted to God he then and there is made a member of the body of Christ, the church.

The Lord saves people into but one body. In fact, in his Word he recognizes but one body. "There is one body. Eph. 4:4. "The body is one." 1 Cor. 12:12. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. 12:13. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Col. 3:15.

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; . . . for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Eph. 2:14-16. From these and many other texts we see that Christ has but one body, and hence but one church. It *is* his body, hence *his* church. All others are but rival churches, earth-born institutions. All others have come into existence since Christ organized his own body. Irrespective of nationality, race prejudice, or any of these things, through salvation all men of all classes are reconciled unto God in one body by the cross. That one body is his church. "But now are we many members, yet but one body." 1 Cor. 12:20.

This body, the church, is a perfectly organized body. All bodies of men banded together in an organized form must necessarily have a head or heads. So with the body of Christ, the church. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Col. 1:18. "But speaking the

truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4:15, 16. What the head is to the human body—the seat of intelligence and the center of control, all the members of the body moving at its dictation — Christ is to his church. Christ is the center from which all the members of the body act and move in their several capacities in the spiritual work of God. One head supposes but one body; hence Christ is the head of only one body, the church. Since Christ is the head of but one body, and that one body is the body of Christ, all other bodies called churches do not hold Christ as the living head.

Not only do we see the organization of the church in the fact that it has a living head, but God sets in this body members to act and work, and their work is conducive to the edification of the body entire. "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." It is God who sets the members in the body, and it is he who

assigns them their work and office, making "some apostles, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Thus the church of God is presented under the figure of a body to show that it is perfectly organized in every particular, divinely so, and needs no tinkering of men, as it is perfect in itself. The fact is, sectarian institutions are to the body of Christ what wooden crutches would be to a sound man. Modern theology teaches us that these institutions are necessary to the organization and the perfect working of the church. If this is so, how is it that the church of God got along so well for centuries before sects arose? The fact is that the church of God in itself is a perfectly organized body; and, with all the inventions and ingenuity of men, they have never been able to improve upon that organization. Wooden crutches are no part of the human body. A man might argue that they are necessary for the speedy travel of man through the world, but such argument would not appear reasonable to an intelligent man with sound limbs and body. He would say,

"The crutches retard my progress, hinder my work." Just so with sectarian institutions; they retard and hinder the progress of the church of God. It is a sound body in itself; there is not a crippled limb or member in it. While for centuries men have been inventing human props and crutches, and compelling the church to limp along upon these, thank God, the time has come when the church of God is casting off all these inventions of men and again walking erect.

A HOUSE.

One of the figures under which the new-testament church is presented is that of a house. A house is a place of abode. Since, therefore, the church in this dispensation is the abode of God himself, it is his house. Under the old-testament dispensation the Lord was pleased to dwell among his people. Therefore he instructed Moses to build him a house—pitch a tabernacle, which was to be sanctified with the blood of animals and with his glory. Into this tent or house the Lord moved and there he dwelt among his people. Later a temple was erected at Jerusalem by Solomon, and this more spacious

structure became the house of God in that dispensation. This house, however, was but a type or shadow of a greater and more perfect tabernacle, which the Lord was to pitch, and not man. In the old-testament dispensation God dwelt in the midst of his people, but in this dispensation of holiness and purity he dwells in the hearts of his people. Accordingly, we read in 2 Cor. 6:16, "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The reason why God could not dwell in the hearts of men during the legal dispensation was that all men were under the dominion and power of sin. The blood of atonement offered in that age was not sufficient fully to eradicate sin from the hearts of the people; and as the place of God's dwelling must be holy, it was impossible for him to dwell in the human soul. Hence a house was built and sanctified, set apart for his indwelling, and thus he moved in and dwelt among his people. But now we have reached the dispensation of full salvation— the dispensation in which the hearts of men can be cleansed and purified from all sin. Yea, "the blood of

Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin"; and "being made free from sin and become servants to God," we become fit places for the Most High to inhabit. Therefore he says of his people, 'Ye are the temple [or house] of the living God. I will dwell in them.'

In Eph. 4:6 we further read, "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." From this text it is made clear that God, the Father, dwells in his people in this dispensation. It is also true that Christ dwells in the hearts of his people. Accordingly, we read in Eph. 3:17, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," and in 2 Cor. 13:5, "Know ye not yourselves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?" The Holy Spirit also dwells in the hearts of the fully saved, "even the Spirit of truth, whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Thus we see that the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—dwells in the hearts of his people. So it is our privilege to "be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:19).

From the above scriptures we draw the con-

clusion that, since God dwells in the hearts of his people, they constitute his house. This position is sustained by plain scriptures. "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." 1 Cor. 3:9. And in Heb. 3:6 it is said of Christ that he is "a Son over his own house, whose house are we." Thus it is made clear that in this dispensation the people of God constitute the house of God. This is true both individually and collectively. Not only does God dwell in his people as individuals, but he dwells in his church as a body, as a collective body of true believers. Accordingly, we read, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 2:5. In this dispensation the Most High "dwelleth not in temples made with hands," as under the legal, but in a spiritual house made up of living stones, and these living stones are none other than the people of God. Again, we read, "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom also ye are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." The reader will observe that God dwells in his church

collectively. The entire body of believers are said to be builded together in a holy temple, for a habitation of God through the Spirit. This makes clear why the people of God constitute and are termed in this dispensation the house of God. Christ is said to be "an high priest over the house of God" (Heb. 10:21). This is the church. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. 3:15. The house of God is the church of God, and God's people constitute the same.

This house was built by Christ. Therefore the apostle says, "Ye are God's building." Man may build many structures and call them churches, but there is one which belongs to the Lord alone. It is the tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man. Hence it is God's building. In Heb. 3:4 it is said, "For every house is built by some man; but he that built all things is God." Since Christ is the builder of his house (church), it necessarily belongs to him, and it is the only house, or church, that does belong to him.

Under this figure the unity and oneness of the

church is again clearly brought out; for everywhere in the Scriptures the church is presented under the figure of one house—one house of God. He dwells in but one, he built but one, he recognizes but one; therefore all structures built by man to be a habitation of God are necessarily void of his presence.

The organization of God's church also is beautifully portrayed under this figure. For as a house is built, it must necessarily be organized. Therefore we read in Eph. 2:21, "In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Just as the mechanic goes into the forest and hews and frames timber, making it ready for the erection of a literal structure; so the Lord finds us in the wilderness of sin and with the broad ax of his eternal truth frames us, hews us with judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, thus fitting us and qualifying us to be builded into his house. And just as the mechanics, after framing the timber, raise up the building; so the Lord "hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). "From whom the whole body, fitly joined to-

gether, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. 4:16. "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:22. From the above we see that God's people are framed together, raised up together, joined together, and builded together. These expressions convey the idea of perfect organization. "And he that built all things is God"; therefore the Lord is the organizer and builder of his church. Accordingly, he says, as recorded in Matt. 16:18, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

In this house are included all the saved. This brings out another beautiful phase of the new-testament church; that is, it is a spiritual structure. In 1 Pet. 2:5 it is termed a spiritual house. Men may erect literal structures and organize temporal churches, but men can not manufacture spiritual things. To God alone belongs the prerogative of founding that which is spiritual. Hence man has not been able to devise a perfect substitute or substitutes for the

church of God. It is a spiritual house, a spiritual church, builded by the Lord of heaven. And in it the saved of all nations find a place of rest. Within its spacious walls the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the learned and the illiterate, men of all classes, conditions, and stations in life, may find a place of refuge. It is the place where God dwells, the place where his rich blessings fall, the place where he manifests his power and his glory.

Christ is to this house its only foundation. Therefore we read in 1 Cor. 3:11, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." He is also its door of entrance. He says, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." John 10:9. This shows that the only way to become a member of the church of God is by obtaining salvation. The only door of admission into the house of God is through Jesus Christ. People are accustomed to hearing the ministry in Babylon speak of opening the doors of our church to take in members; but no man can open or shut the door of God's church. Christ himself is the door and salvation the mode of induction. It follows, then, that none are members of the

true church of God but those who are saved. This leaves every sinner outside of the new-testament church. The above being true, "holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, forever" (Psa. 93:5). In this house we gather and eat the bread of life and drink the crystal waters of salvation in the courts of his holiness (Isa. 62:9).

A HOUSEHOLD.

Under this figure the church is presented as a family. It is the family of God, one family in heaven and on earth. God has but one family, and that family includes all his children. Nothing less than this constitutes the church. Any institution or organization that does not include in its membership the entire family of God in heaven and on earth can not be the new-testament church. As a family, God is our Father and we are his children. Therefore we read in 2 Cor. 6:18, "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Some teachers in modern times say that we shall not really be the sons of God until the resurrection morning; but John says, "Be-

loved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2. Not in the future age shall we become sons, but "now are we the sons of God." We become so through the new birth. "As many as received him, to him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, . . . of God." John 1:12, 13. We become children of natural families through natural birth, and just so we become children of God, members of his spiritual family, through spiritual birth. "Of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her." Psa. 87:5. It would, indeed, sound strange for a child to speak to his parents about joining their family. Intelligence would teach him that he was a member of the family by virtue of natural birth. Just so is it ridiculous in the sight or eyes of the Lord for men to speak of joining the church after conversion or the new birth, for the fact is, the very moment individuals are born of the Spirit of God, they are then and there made members of his church. This church or family of God is termed in Gal. 6:10 "the household of

faith," and in Eph. 2: 19 it is termed "the household of God," the latter term signifying to whom the church belongs.

As in every home there should be government, law, and order, so in the household of God, Christ is the head of the family. He has placed the members under government and rule, and he demands that they all be "obedient children." "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." The New Testament is the law by which this household is governed, and every member must observe all things commanded (Matt. 28: 20). If in anything any member of the Lord's household become unruly and fail to behave himself as Christians should, the rod of correction will be used (Heb. 12: 5-11).

Under this figure, then, is brought out clearly the universality of the church, its exclusiveness, and its government.

A WOMAN.

One beautiful figure under which the new-testament church is presented is that of a woman. In Rev. 12: 1 we read, "And there

appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This woman represents the true church of God in her primitive beauty and glory. Her being "clothed with the sun" would signify that she was clothed with the authority, power, glory, holiness, might, and truth of Christ himself. The crown upon her head would signify that she was a queen. The twelve stars in her crown signify the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Thus the true church is presented to us under the figure of a beautiful woman, while in the seventeenth chapter of this same book of symbols the apostate church is presented under the figure of a corrupted, adulterous woman decked with the filthiness of her fornications.

Under this figure of a woman the church appears as a bride. Of her John the Baptist in his ministry said, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." John 3:29. The bridegroom is Christ, and the bride is his church. Again, in 2 Cor. 11:2 we read, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." In these texts the re-

lationship between Christ and his church, or people, is expressed as being an espousal. Jesus came to earth to purchase for himself a bride. He purchased her with his own precious blood, and under this figure she became his. During the present dispensation she is called out from this world of sin, and is robed in the garments of salvation, with his own righteousness, termed "white linen, clean and white," and thus she is being made ready to be presented to him "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

At the second coming Christ will appear to receive his bride unto himself. This, in figure, is called the marriage of the Lamb. See Rev. 19:7, 8. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb." What that great supper will consist of we are not now able to tell, but then will be fulfilled the words of Jesus, "I will eat and drink anew with you in my Father's kingdom." In that new earth the church is seen as a bride, the Lamb's wife, the marriage having taken place. Under this figure, then, our future and eternal union with Christ is expressed by the term "marriage"—the marriage of the Lamb.

Under another and separate figure our present union with Christ is beautifully expressed by the same term. Paul, in Rom. 7:1-4, draws a beautiful analogy between a couple joined in the sacred bonds of wedlock and Christ and his people as individuals. "That we should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead." In Eph. 5:23-33 it will be seen that in some respects the same relationship which exists between the husband and the wife in natural matrimony, exists between Christ and his church. As the husband is the head of the wife, so Christ is the head of the church. As the wife is to be subject to her husband, so the church is subject to Christ. Husbands are exhorted to love their wives as Christ loved the church. Husbands are exhorted to nourish and cherish their wives even as the Lord does the church. As a husband and a wife are no more twain, but one flesh; so we are members of his body, his flesh, and his bones. In this we have a beautiful figure of the present close relationship that exists between Christ and his church, or people, on earth. Just as the woman must forsake home, friends, and all, and cleave to her husband; so the Lord re-

quires of us in order to be numbered among those who constitute his true bride, that we forsake father, mother, friends, and even our own life, and cleave to him alone. And as a true wife loves her husband and lives in true affection with him, so we love him because he first loved us.

In the S. of Sol. 4:7 the Lord speaks of the church in the following language: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." And again, of her the prophet said, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one. She is the only one of her mother." Measured by these texts, the sectarian institutions in the world today, called churches, fall far short of being the bride of Christ; in fact, they form no part of her. Christ has but one wife. He has but one church. Under this figure is again clearly brought to view the oneness and the exclusiveness of the new-testament church.

There is still another figure in which a beautiful relationship between the church and God, the Father, is expressed. "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name, . . . the Holy One of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called." Isa. 54:5.

Here, the church is spoken of as being married to God. "As a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." "Thou shalt be called Hephzibah [my delight is in her], and thy land Beulah [which means "married"]." Isa. 62:4, 5. Under this figure the church is our spiritual mother and God our father. Accordingly, we read that "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26). The church being the spiritual mother, she travails for the salvation of a lost world and brings forth children (Isa. 66:8). As a good mother, she bears us upon her sides and dandles us upon her knees. She satisfies her children with the breasts of her consolations; and they are permitted to milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory (Isa. 66:11, 12). In fulfilment Paul says, "I have fed you with milk." Peter thus expressed it: "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." 1 Pet. 2:2.

As a true wife endeavors to honor and reverence her husband, she bears his name. No true wife will think of taking some other man's name. Just so it is with the church. Being

married to God, she bears his name. How consistent, then, the name given her by the Lord! Christ said in his prayer to the Father, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in *thy* name." "Holy Father, keep through [Greek, in] thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one." His name being God, she was properly named "the church of God." This is the name given in the New Testament. Both as a family and as a wife taking her husband's name, she is termed "the church of God." For the church to take other names, as the various sects have, is to cast reflection upon the Lord and to make the institution guilty of the sin of adultery.

Since God is recognized as being the husband of his church, he bears, in many respects, the relationship that a true husband bears to his wife. He supplies all her needs. In Phil. 4:19 we read, "My God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." Psa. 23:5. This table is spread with the dainties of heaven, rich things of the kingdom of grace; and the

willing and obedient are enabled to eat the good of the land. Thus they shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of the Lord's house. He shall make them to drink of the rivers of his pleasures. A husband provides raiment for his wife; so the Lord clothes us with the garments of salvation, yea, he covers us with the robe of righteousness. The Lord also furnishes light for his church. Accordingly, we read in Isa. 60:19, 20: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." What a beautiful picture is here portrayed! The Lord has become the light of his church, or people. He also promises grace sufficient for every trial and every need. "My grace is sufficient for thee," and "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8). In this figure, then, we have God acting as a husband unto the

church and as a kind, loving Father to all of her children.

A CITY.

Another figure under which the new-testament church is presented is that of a city. It was predicted by the prophet Isaiah, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Isa. 26:1. The day referred to is the gospel day. The strong city is a prediction of the new-testament church. Salvation was to be her walls and bulwarks. These were means of protection used by nations and cities in ancient times. In time of war the people would flock inside the city walls and feel secure. The people then did not have such implements of warfare as we have in modern times. The ancient city of Babylon had, it is said, a wall 350 feet in height, about 87 feet thick, and 60 miles in length. The church was to be a strong city, and one reason of her great strength was the fact that salvation would be her impregnable walls and bulwarks.

In Isa. 62:12 the church was prophesied of in the following language: "And they shall call

them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." Again, in Isa. 60:18 is this prophecy: "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Such a city the world had never seen, a spiritual city, a city made up of saved men and women, each individual constituting a house in this city. And the gates of this spiritual city are said to be praise. This signifies the songs of triumph and the shouts of victory that emanate from the people of God.

Throughout the prophecies and in the New Testament as well, Zion and Jerusalem are very often used as metaphors signifying the new-testament church. For example, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Such language as this could not apply to a temporal city, but can apply only to the church of God. She is here seen clothed in beautiful garments, a holy city. Under this figure, then, the purity

of the church is presented. The words, "Henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean," mean that since salvation is the mode of induction into Zion, the church of God, only such are members of Zion as have been born of God (Psa. 87:5). So Zion, or Jerusalem, is composed of none other than those who are truly saved.

"Thy watchman shall lift up their voices; with the voices together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Isa. 52:8. This was true of the watchmen, or ministers, in the early morning of the Christian dispensation; but there came an apostasy, as was predicted, and that very faithful city, which was once full of judgment and righteousness, became a harlot (Isa. 1:21). 'The princes became thieves, loved gifts, followed after rewards; they judged not the fatherless; they mixed the wine with water.' Isa. 1:22, 23. This refers to the condition of things during the great apostasy. The mixing of wine with water signifies adulteration of the Word of God. But the prophet also foretold the fact that the time would come when the Lord would restore the judges as at the first and the coun-

selors as at the beginning, and that Zion should be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness. And after this she was to be called the city of righteousness, a faithful city (verses 25 to 27). Thank God, we have reached that time. We are living in the fulfilment of this prophecy. God is bringing again Zion, restoring judgment to the ministry, and bringing the people of God to the pristine unity and oneness, organization and holiness, authority and power, of the early church. And as the church comes back to the same plane upon which she stood in the beginning, thank God, the language of the prophecy is being fulfilled in that the watchmen, or ministry, see eye to eye.

In Isa. 4: 3, 4 we have a further prediction of this. "It shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy; even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem in the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning." Here we see that when judgment goes forth in the church in the last days, the

result will be a clean, pure, separate church, and that all left therein shall be holy.

In Joel 3:17 the same thought is presented: "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." Thank God, we are inhabitants of that city in these last days. The people of God who long have been scattered in the filthy city of Babylon, "that great city which reigneth over all the earth," are casting off the yokes of men and returning to Zion. Yea, "the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads" (Isa. 35:10). And as we return to the beautiful city of God, and dwell in the heights of Zion, God manifests his power as in the days of yore, and waters of salvation begin to flow. Yea, living waters, crystal streams of deliverance, peace, and joy, flow out to darkened hearts around us. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." Joel 2:32.

In this city Zion—the church—true holiness can be found. "But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." Obadiah 17. Thank God, this city is filled with holiness, and true holiness is that which adorns her. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." This river is the river of salvation. Its streams are love, joy, peace, light, glory, and eternal life. And as men and women scattered throughout the realms of sin and dark sectism in these last days come back to the city of Zion, the holy Jerusalem, the church of the first-born, they have the privilege of drinking these crystal waters until their souls are fully satisfied. Oh the sweetness, the glory, the grandeur of this city of God, and the blessedness of dwelling therein! Not alone in a future age beyond the resurrection are we to enjoy these rich blessings, but we "are come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven" (Heb. 12:22). Here it is seen that this city and the church are identical, and in this dispensation we have come unto

it. Under this figure of a city, then, we see the security, government, and beauty of the church of God.

A MOUNTAIN.

One of the most beautiful and striking figures of the new-testament church is that of a mountain. Under this figure is presented its stability, grandeur, and eudurance.

Turning to Isa. 2:2, 3, we find the following prediction: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." This is a clear prediction of the new-testament church. "The last days" refers to the Christian dispensation. The church here is presented under the figure of a mountain upon which the Lord's house is located. And this mountain "shall be established in the

top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills." This refers to an exalted position of Christianity. All other religions are far beneath it. Christianity mounts up above every other religion and the church of God above every other institution.

Another beauty of this church is seen in the fact that "all nations shall flow unto it." Under the legal dispensation the privileges and blessings of God were extended to one nation only, but the new-testament church was to open her doors to all the nations of the earth, and the saved of all nations were to flow unto it. Thank God, we have the fulfilment of this today; for the gospel is going forth to all the nations of the earth, and such as are being saved are brought from the dark valleys and realms of sin to the high mount of holiness, truth, and salvation, and are flowing into the one church of the living God.

In Dan. 2:34, 35, Christianity is presented under the figure of a great mountain, which shall fill the whole earth. This signifies that ultimately Christianity will conquer the nations and be the universal religion. As we shall hereafter show, we are living in the very time and

taking part in the very work which in God's providence is destined to fulfil this prediction. Paul, in writing to the Hebrew brethren, says, "Ye are come unto Mount Zion." Heb. 12:22. As we point the telescope back across the mists and fogs that roll at our feet, back over the dark valley of apostasy covering a period of 1610 years, we behold in the distance a beautiful mountain transplendent with the rays of the morning sun, and upon her height the house of God, which is the church of the living God. This mount is the mount of God's own holiness. Thus saith the Lord, "I am returned unto Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain." This is a clear prediction of the new-testament church. Jerusalem and the mountain refers to the church of God. Notice it is the mountain of the Lord of hosts; that is, the mount upon which he dwells, and the same is said to be holy.

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the

north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Psa. 48:1-3. This text primarily may refer to the literal city of Zion, Jerusalem; but since that was but a type or shadow of the spiritual Zion, the new-testament church, there is a beautiful application of this scripture to the people of God in this dispensation. As the saints gather in Zion, inside her impregnable walls of salvation, their shouts of praise and thanksgiving to God are again heard; and as they come to the mount of his holiness and possess the same glory that adorned the early church, the gates of praise fly open, and God is glorified in the midst of them. This church is said to be the city of the great king. "God is known in all her palaces." This represents the fact that the Lord dwells in this holy mountain, and here is the place where his blessings fall. "The Lord shall bless thee, O habitation of justice and mountain of holiness." Jer. 31:23. Not only does the Lord bless his people in Zion, but, as predicted in Isa. 26:6, he spreads a feast of rich things before them. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of

marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Those who have been famishing and starving on the barren mountains of sin and down in the cold regions of Babylon—as they come to this mountain of holiness and truth, they find a feast of rich dainties, the best that heaven can afford. Thus "the Lord satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

But God's people did not always remain upon this mountain of holiness. Jesus predicted that many false teachers would arise and deceive many, and Paul said that after his departing grievous wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock, and that disciples would be turned away from the truth. This came to pass, and the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled, as recorded in the sixth verse of the fiftieth chapter: "My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from the mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting-place." Since the church of God is presented under the figure of a great mountain, the mountain of God's holiness, all rival churches, or man-made ecclesiastical institutions that have since arisen, are brought to

view under the figures of mountains and hills, signifying large sects and small ones. In these the people of God, during the reign of apostasy, have been scattered. "And they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered upon all the mountains and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." This is fulfilled in God's people having been scattered throughout all the realms of sectism. Good people have been led into all the many religious bodies extant in the world today. But it is a fact that, while God's people have been led into these places, the places themselves—institutions of Babylon—have granted no salvation or deliverance to those who entered their folds. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." Jer. 3:23.

But we are glad to say that this condition of affairs was not always to continue. It was prophesied by Isaiah that the time would come when God's people should be gathered from

these mountains and hills in which they have been scattered. "I will make thee a new sharp threshing-instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shall make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." Isa. 41:15, 16. This sharp threshing-instrument is nothing else than God's holy ministry with the eternal truth. The mountains of Babylon were to be threshed and beaten small, in order that God's people may be gathered therefrom. We are living in that time, and the ransomed of the Lord are returning to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads (Isa. 35:10).

In the morning glory of the church God's people abode in and enjoyed the blessings of Mount Zion; but false teachers led them away, and for centuries they were scattered, as the foregoing scriptures declare. In these last days, however, the people of God are privileged to return and to enjoy the same government, organization, purity, oneness, and power enjoyed by the primitive church. And as the ministers of

God assemble in these last days in the heights of Zion, they blow the trumpet of eternal truth to all the nations of the earth, and this trumpet assembles together all who are willing to meet the requisite conditions and requirements of the gospel. This prepares the church for the coming of the Lord. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Joel 2:1. God sends forth his messengers and every honest soul is gathered. "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." Jer. 16:16. Thus are God's people in these last days gathered from the holes of sin and deception in which they have been lodging, and with singing and rejoicing they are brought home to Zion, to the mountain of the Lord. Here upon the mountain of God's own holiness we stand with our souls illuminated by the brilliant, transplendent glory of the setting sun in this blessed evening light. We stand upon

the summit of the same Zion, the same mount of God's own holiness—the church of the living God—upon which the early church stood and found a place of refuge.

The Primitive Church a Triumphant Church.

In Babylon theology we hear much of the church militant here below and the church triumphant over in heaven; but the dwellers in Zion have found the church triumphant here on earth and reign therein over every foe. True, there are battles to fight and enemies to conquer, and this proves a militant state of the church; but "thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Cor. 2:14. Yes, always. And this triumphant state is not confined to heaven, but right here on earth "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37). Yes, "they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17. These texts beautifully express the victory enjoyed by the primitive Christians.

The kingdom of Christ is represented as engaged in constant conflict and as always being victorious. Christ reigns while his enemies are being conquered; "for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor.

15:25). In the very opening of the plan of redemption Christianity is represented as an aggressive conquering power, under the following symbol: "And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Rev. 6:2. The symbol is that of a victorious warrior, and is drawn from the civil and military life of the Romans. He well represents the primitive church of God. The white horse denotes purity. Holiness was the mighty steed upon which the Christian church rushed to battle. The rider, no doubt, signifies the ministers, who stood for the church entire. The bow signifies that this rider was a warrior. With the sword of truth the early ministry and church rushed forth to battle against the powerful systems of error with which they had to contend. A crown was given unto him. Why? Because he conquered. "He went forth conquering, and to conquer." This rider wore the victor's crown. So the early ministry and church triumphed over every foe. They multiplied into a strong kingdom of priests and reigned in life. Thus Christ conquered nations through his pure church and ministry. She was

seen terrible as an army with banners (S. of Sol. 6:10).

OVER SIN AND DEATH.

In the early morning of Christianity the church of God enjoyed perfect freedom from sin and victory over it. "They sung a new song, saying, . . . thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." Rev. 5:9, 10. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." Rev. 1:5, 6.

For four thousand years the world was held under the power and dominion of sin. As a result, "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Paul said that "death reigned" and that "sin hath reigned unto death." The gloomy pall of sin and death hung over all—spiritual death, which comes as a result of sin. But Christ came mighty to save, and through his death and resurrection conquered death. Yes, "abolished death and brought light and immortality to life through

the gospel"; and "he that hath the Son hath life." "God hath given unto us his eternal life, and this life is in his Son." So the really saved "are passed from death unto life." In this divine spiritual life is granted perfect deliverance from all sin. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Rom. 6:18. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin"; and this happy condition is not the state of the saints of God merely in heaven, "but *now* being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22). "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are under grace." Rom. 6. 14. Thus by being redeemed, washed in the blood of Christ, the early Christians were made kings, and reigned in life over sin and death. Not only did they obtain a perfect deliverance from sin, but through the abundant grace of God which was granted them, they were enabled to serve God in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life (Luke 1:75); yes, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world (Tit. 2:11, 12). That blessed reign of righteousness through

Christ, as we shall hereafter see, is restored to us in this evening time.

OVER SATAN, THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS.

Originally man was a king and reigned over the world. It lay prostrate at his feet. He held dominion. "Thou . . . hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou hast set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Psa. 8:5, 6. But through the subtility of the devil, man lost his kingdom and became a servant—was brought under bondage. Satan became prince of this world and held dominion over all mankind. Over four thousand years he held them fast under sin and death. During that time they were never fully delivered from his tyrannical rule. But Christ, the king of heaven, came to earth to restore to man "the first dominion." He set up the kingdom of heaven in direct opposition to the kingdom of darkness. He began by saving men from their sins and by healing "all that were oppressed of the devil." Thus he "spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them." This caused Satan's kingdom to fall "like lightning" (Luke 10:18).

By giving his life on the cross and rising triumphant from the grave, Christ conquered death, sin, and hell, bringing salvation, freedom, life, and liberty to all men. Hear his own words, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "Wherefore he is able to save them unto the uttermost that come unto God by him." He began to proclaim 'liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; and to bring out the prisoners from the prison.' He led forth a "multitude of captives" into the glorious freedom of truth.

Thus the prince of the world, Satan, was cast out (John 12:31) and Christ was raised up a Prince, a Savior (Acts 5:31), Prince of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5), Prince of life (Acts 3:15). This same power he gave to the church. "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents, and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." Luke 10:19. Thus we see the prince of darkness dethroned, the god of this world cast down, and Christ and his church reigning over him.

OVER PAGANISM UNDER THE ROMAN POWER.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, marched

his armies to Jerusalem, destroyed the city and house of God, took the vessels of the temple and the remaining Jews, and carried them away captive. This occurred B. C. 606. Among the captives previously carried to Babylon was one Daniel, who was especially endued with wisdom from on high. Nebuchadnezzar, in the second year of his reign, had a remarkable dream. In his dream he saw a great image. As he was an idolater, an image was an object that would at once command his attention and respect. But the thing went from him; therefore he called all the magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers. None of these, however, could reveal or interpret the dream. Finally God revealed the matter to Daniel, who made known to the king his dream as follows:

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were

of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Dan. 2:31-35.

These five short verses open one of the most sublime chapters of human history. It is so comprehensive that the period which it covers, beginning more than twenty-five centuries ago, reaches from that far-distant point past the rise and fall of kingdoms, past epochs and ages, over into the eternal state—yes, to all eternity.

First, in the vision, are brought to view four universal monarchies, which flourished in succession in ancient times. The first of these is represented by the head of gold, interpreted by the prophet as follows: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. . . . Thou art this head of gold." Verse 37, 38. By this we understand that the Chaldean kingdom is what the head of gold repre-

sented. It was a golden kingdom in a golden age. Babylon, its metropolis, lay in the garden of the East. The city lay in a perfect square, fifteen miles on each side. It was surrounded by a wall three hundred and fifty feet high and eighty-seven feet thick. It had one hundred and fifty gates of solid brass. Its hanging gardens were a wonderment. This city contained many things which were wonders of the world, but the city itself was the greatest wonder of its time. It was in this city, by the rivers of Babylon, that the Israelite captives sat down and wept, when they remembered Zion. Said they, "We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Psa. 137: 1-4. I presume it is safe to say that never before did the earth see a city like this; and since it has never seen its equal. With the earth prostrate at her feet, she sat "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency." Such was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar, in the prime of life, its ruler,

when the Israelite captives entered its impregnable walls to serve for seventy years.

While Babylon was founded by Nimrod over two thousand years before Christ, it did not enter the field of prophecy until connected with the people of God, which was about 606 B. C. Here the head of gold began in history and continued until 538 B. C., when, during the reign of Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, the kingdom fell into the hands of the Medes and the Persians (see Daniel 5).

The Medo-Persian kingdom is what was represented by the breast and arms of silver interpreted by Daniel as follows: "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." Verse 39. It was not inferior in power nor in the extent to which it carried its conquests, for Cyrus erected the most extensive empire that had ever existed; but it was far inferior in wealth, luxury, and magnificence. The Medo-Persian kingdom, however, was finally overthrown by the Grecians. This occurred about 286 B. C.

The Grecian empire is what was represented by the belly and thighs of brass, interpreted by Daniel as "a third kingdom of brass, which

shall bear rule over all the earth" (verse 39). The conquests of Grecia under Alexander have no parallel in historic annals for suddenness and rapidity. The legs of iron and the feet, part of iron and part of clay, Daniel interprets to be the "fourth kingdom" in its strong yet divided condition (verses 40-43). A careful reading of verses 41 and 42 will show that the feet, part of iron and clay, are termed "the kingdom," though divided. This was Rome.

Thus far in this vision the image represents four universal kingdoms; namely, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold." Verses 44, 45. This language is so clear that it would seem impossible to misunderstand it. "In the days of these kings"—kingdoms. Only four kingdoms are seen in the image. Only *four* are

spoken of in the interpretation. In their days, or before they should pass off the field of action, the God of heaven would set up his everlasting kingdom. While they yet held the dominion, the stone would be cut out and would smash them to pieces. Ah, beloved reader, how wonderful the fulfilment!

It was when Rome, the fourth of the above kingdoms, had reached the summit of its glory and power; when its domain was so large that it was denominated "all the world" (Luke 2: 1); when Augustus Cæsar was an absolute sovereign, ruling over three hundred millions of people,—it was then that there was born in the village of Bethlehem, Judea, a babe, who, though he was cradled in a manger and his infant cries were no doubt mingled with the lowing of oxen and the bleating of lambs, was destined to establish this everlasting kingdom. Without fagot or sword, without war and bloodshed, with no weapons but the gospel of Christ, the blood of the Lamb, and burning testimony, this kingdom marched onward with conquering power, until the heathen kingdoms of darkness were broken in pieces. The lion-hearted rulers of nations handed over their scepters to the

"Lion of the tribe of Judah," whose throne is forever and ever; and a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of his kingdom (Heb. 1:8). In fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.*" Mark 1:14, 15. The dispensation of the glorious gospel of infinite mercy and manifestation of eternal truth by Jesus Christ, was now to fully open up to all mankind. This is called a kingdom because it has laws, all the moral precepts of the gospel; subjects, all who believe in Christ Jesus; and a king, the Sovereign of heaven and earth.

From the above scripture we learn four things: First, that everything that is done is according to a plan laid by divine wisdom, and not performed till the time appointed. Second, that the kingdom and the reign of sin were to be destroyed, and the kingdom of grace and heaven be established in their place. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are . . . under grace." Third, that the kingdom of God and his reign by grace begins with re-

pentance of past sins. Fourth, that this reign of grace is *at hand,* and that it began with Christ's ministry, when the time was announced "fulfilled." And now nothing but an obstinate perseverance in sin and impenitence can keep a soul out of it, and *now* is the time to enter in.

Christ came to establish his church, of which he is the everlasting head and governor. He set up a government and kingdom which is eternal. Revolutions may destroy the kingdoms of earth, but the gates of hell and death shall never be able to destroy the kingdom, or church, of Christ. His is the only dominion that shall never have an end. In the language of Dr. A. Clark, "The kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory form the endless government of Christ." This was the stone that smote the image upon its feet and broke them in pieces. And, as portrayed in this prophecy, pagan Rome finally was broken in pieces under the iron rod of the gospel of Christ, and fell A. D. 476. That iron kingdom, which once ruled the earth, crumbled to pieces under the fire of gospel truth and holiness, and the church of God triumphed. Christianity became the fifth universal king-

dom. Rome became the last of earthly kingdoms that ever swayed universal authority, or ever will. But Christ's kingdom is universal. The uttermost parts of the earth are his possession. In every nation are to be found disciples of Christ. Kings and magistrates bow before him and do him homage.

Before passing from this prophecy, we shall take a little space to consider the erroneous position of millenarians. They argue that, as the ten toes of the image represent the ten divided kingdoms of Rome, these were the kingdoms to be in existence when Christ should set up his everlasting kingdom; and since none of those ten kingdoms were in existence when Christ appeared in his first advent, they conclude that the establishment of Christ's kingdom is yet future. Their position is false for the following reasons:

1. The ten toes are not called kingdoms in the prophecy. The legs, feet, and toes are all summed up in this prophecy as "the kingdom" —the "fourth kingdom" (verse 40-43). Only the four universal monarchies—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome—are called kingdoms. The image, as a whole, represents these four.

They are called kingdoms. "And in the days of these kings [kingdoms]" the God of heaven was to set up his everlasting kingdom; that is, during their reign, before they passed off the field of action. While they yet held dominion, as before proved, this was fulfilled by the coming of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom, or church, during the reign of Rome. Christianity fulfilled the prophecy in smashing to pieces these heathen powers.

2. The time can not reach to Christ's second coming, for none of the original ten kingdoms are now in existence. Three of them fell under popery (Dan. 7:8, 20, 24). They have all long since passed away. There are in existence today probably twenty fragments of those original kingdoms, but the toes of the image are no more.

3. The image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream was evidently a well-proportioned man. His toes were of the proper size. But millenialists would say that Nebuchadnezzar saw a man with toes longer than the man. Let us measure that image from the crown of his head to his toes. The Babylonian kingdom, represented by the head of gold, came into prophecy about 600

B. C. The first of the ten kingdoms of Rome was formed about A. D. 356. This was the Huns. This would make in all 956 years. So the whole image measured less than one thousand years, till we reach the toes. Now, if those toes still exist, as foolish millenarians suppose, they would measure over 1,500 years. That would make a man with toes 500 years longer than the man. Such are the absurdities of those who believe in a future literal kingdom to be established upon earth.

4. The stone struck the image upon his feet. But since there is no longer feet or toes of that image left, the kingdom of God is already established. When set up by Christ, it was a small stone, but it began to enlarge and finally became so great that, when Rome became brittle, Christianity struck her such an awful blow that she flew to pieces.

5. All the New-Testament scriptures teach that the kingdom was set up at Christ's first advent. See Mark 1:14, 15; John 18:36, 37; John 1:49; John 12:12-15; Luke 19:37, 38; Matt. 21:4, 5; Heb. 2:9; Rev. 1:5; Eph. 1:20-22; Heb. 1:7, 8; Heb. 4:16; Luke 17:20-22; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 1:5, 6; Rom. 5:17; Luke 16:

16; Matt. 3:12; Matt. 4:17; Matt. 11:12; Matt. 12:28; Mark 12:34; Matt. 16:28; Luke 9:27; Mark 9:1; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9. These twenty-six positive texts, with many more, are surely a sufficient apology for our not accepting the false doctrine of a future kingdom upon earth. The only kingdom yet future is the everlasting kingdom of glory above, which we shall enter when time is no more.

The same conflict and victory of the church over paganism under the Roman power is beautifully portrayed in the book of Revelation. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all

nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Rev. 12:1-6.

Prior to this, John saw a door opened in heaven, and heard a voice, saying, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." "And immediately I was in the Spirit," he says (Rev. 4:1, 2). This explains such expressions as, "There appeared a great wonder in heaven," and, "There was war in heaven," etc. While in the Spirit, John saw in symbol; or, in other words, there passed before him a panorama of visions, of great events which were to take place upon the earth. He saw in heaven, in vision, what would take place upon earth in reality.

The woman here described represents the true church of God—the bride of Christ—in her primitive unity and purity. The blessed union which exists between Christ and his people is explained by the term "marriage." This is true both of our present spiritual union with Christ and of our future eternal union with him.

The whole church is in Scripture termed "the Lamb's wife," "the bride of Christ," etc. She was "clothed with the sun"—a striking emblem of Jesus Christ, the "Sun of righteousness," the light and glory of the church. The church was clothed with his righteousness, which is represented in the same apocalypse by "pure linen, clean and white" (Rev. 19:8). She was clothed with his holiness, with the beautiful garments of salvation. The result was that she was a pure church. She was clothed with his power; for to her he said, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy." Thus she was equipped to battle the hosts of hell, and this power was manifest in the salvation of sinners, the sanctification of believers, and the healing of the sick of all manner of diseases. She was clothed with his authority and judgments. The result was that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." "And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things." "And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them."

"And upon her head a crown." Ah! she sat a queen. Her husband, the glorious Lord, is the king of heaven—"King of kings, and Lord of lords." He ascended on high, "crowned with glory and honor," and now reigns a monarch over earth and sky. His wife—the church—shares this royal honor. With the same glory that the Father crowned him, he crowned her. "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." She shares his reign in the kingdom of peace. "A crown upon her head." She reigns with Christ over sin, Satan, and the world. "He died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God"; and to the church it is said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Jesus testified that "all power in heaven and in earth is given unto me," and to the church he gave "power over all the power of the enemy." He testifies, "I have overcome the world"; and we read that "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."

The twelve stars in her crown represent the twelve apostles of the Lamb. These adorned her fair brow. Her travail in birth and pain to be delivered represent the earnest labor of the early church for the salvation of the world.

The fruit of matrimony is offspring. The object of our marriage to Christ is that we may bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:1-4). Like a true wife, the church joined heart and soul with him in the great cause that drew him to the earth. The whole church is a unit made up of "workers together with God" in the salvation of lost souls. Both "the Spirit and the bride say, Come." "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."

It is said that she "brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." The question before us now is, What does this man child represent? Many expositors suppose it refers to Christ; but for the following reasons it can not: The woman here referred to is the new-testament church. This church labors and pains to be delivered, and suddenly brings forth this child. Christ is not a child of the church of God. She is not his mother. He is her founder, her husband, the Father of this child. The prophet calls him "the everlasting Father." Since it can not refer to Christ, we shall clearly prove that it refers to the great and mighty host of children brought forth by the pristine church.

This man child is clearly defined in the prophecy of Isaiah as follows: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Isa. 63: 7-13.

Here is the same man child seen in Revelation 12. The same is declared to be "a *nation* born

at once," "*in one day.*" "She [Zion] was delivered of a man child." In surprise the prophet exclaims: "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall *a nation be born at once?* for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." This is clear. A nation of children born suddenly constitutes the man child who was to rule the nations with a rod of iron. This child 'sucks the breasts of her consolations, and milks out, and is delighted with the abundance of her glory; is borne upon her sides, and dandled upon her knees.' What does this refer to but new-born babes, who desire the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2:2)? Paul said to some of these "babes in Christ," "I have fed you with milk." 1 Cor. 3:1-3. Was not this fulfilled in the early church? While Zion (one hundred and twenty in number) was in travail in an upper room in Jerusalem, they suddenly brought forth, and a nation of three thousand children was born into the family *in one day.* In a few days the number of children increased to about ten thousand. It was but a little while until the number increased to hundreds of thou-

sands. At an early date the church at Antioch alone numbered one hundred thousand. A great and mighty nation of children born at once; born unto Zion.

But why is this called a man child? It will be observed in Eph. 2:15 that the host of Jews and Gentiles born unto the church of God, made one in his blood, reconciled unto God in one body, constitute "one new man." This is the man child, just as the great apostate church is termed the "man of sin" in 2 Thessalonians 2. But it may be objected that this child was to rule the nations. True; and so did this host. It was prophesied of them by Daniel, "But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." Dan. 7:18. The Lord himself applies the foregoing language to his people in Rev. 2:26, 27: "And he that overcometh, . . . to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. This represents the glorious triumph of the early church. The breaking of the nations

into shivers and the ruling of them with a rod of iron is the same as the stone of Daniel 2 breaking in pieces and consuming the brass, iron, silver, and gold, until no place was found for them. Those heathen nations were consumed before the onward march of Christianity. The iron rod of the gospel broke them to pieces.

But it is said that John saw another wonder —"A great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." This dragon represents Rome under the pagan religion. Rome was truly a dragon power. Its color—red—denotes its bloodthirstiness. Its seven heads are elsewhere explained as follows: "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." Rev. 17:9. But the seven heads of this power are further explained. "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space." Rev. 17:10. These were the seven supreme forms of government that ruled the empire. They were as follows: the regal power, the dictatorship, the decemvirate, the consular, the triumvirate, the imperial, and the patriciate. At the time John wrote the book of

Revelation, the first "five were fallen." He says, "One is." The sixth head, or that which existed in John's time, was the imperial head under the Cæsars. The seventh head, John says, "Is not yet come"; it had not yet appeared. When it should come, it was to continue but "a short space." This was the patriciate. It ruled the empire only about twenty-six years. A further exposition of this will be given farther on in this chapter.

The ten horns of the dragon represent the ten kingdoms which grew out of the Roman empire (Rev. 17:12). They were the Huns, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Franks, the Vandals, the Suevi, the Burgundians, the Heruli, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Lombards. The tail of the dragon signifies the latter end of his reign. The casting down of the stars doubtless refers to the thousands of bright luminaries who were martyred during the reign of paganism; for it is said that the dragon stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born. How awfully true! Just as fast as men accepted the Christian faith the pagans were ready to devour them. Such were the bloody days of the church under pagan Rome. But

Christianity spread so rapidly, and the gospel had such a crushing effect, that Rome finally tottered and fell.

But what became of that holy nation—the great host of saints, who were marching onward victorious over every foe? They suddenly disappeared from the earth. The child was caught up to God and to his throne. They ascended to paradise, while darkness, superstition, and iniquity flooded the earth. The brilliant light of Christianity was eclipsed by the darkness of apostasy.

"The woman fled into the wilderness." This wilderness signifies the great apostasy into which the church went. It is a fact that the apostasy rapidly developed at the end of the pagan persecutions. However, we will consider that more fully later on. The above is one description. Again we are taken over the same ground.

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,

which deceived the whole earth: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Rev. 12: 7: 14.

It has been thought by some that this great conflict took place in the eternal heavens between Beelzebub and Christ; but such a view is

very erroneous. To say that the eternal heavens, where purity and holiness reign, was once the scene of war, is preposterous in the extreme. This is to be understood the same as the wonders in heaven. John while *in the Spirit* saw in vision what took place upon the earth in reality. This great conflict took place in the early morning of the Christian era.

But who is Michael? "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9. Jude here calls him the archangel—chief or head of the angelic host. We have but to inquire who this is to have the solution. 1 Pet. 3:21, 22—"Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." "Again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1:6. Christ then is the archangel, whom Jude terms Michael. Daniel calls Michael "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people" (Dan. 12:1). This is a clear prophecy of Christ, whom

"God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:30, 31. We deem the foregoing sufficient to convince any one that Michael is the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, when Michael conquered the dragon, the host of heaven sent up a shout to God, because "the power of his Christ" was manifest (verse 10).

As before proved, the dragon represents paganism, or Rome under the pagan religion. Now, if by the dragon be meant Beelzebub himself, then we are necessarily led to the conclusion that the great apostate spirit is a monster having seven heads and ten horns, and also that he has a tail, with which he drags after him the third part of the stars of heaven. God never created such an angel, nor can it be proved that Satan now has such an appearance. The appellations "old serpent," "Devil," and "Satan" must therefore be understood figuratively. The heathen power was called "that old serpent which deceiveth the whole world," from its subtlety against the Christians, and its causing almost the whole then-known world as far as was in its power to embrace the ab-

surdities of paganism. From its great opposition to the Christian church, it was called Satan, which is a Hebrew word signifying an adversary. It was also called the devil, because its religion was purely of devilish origin. Paul says that "the things which the Gentiles [heathen nations] sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils; . . . and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye can not drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils." 1 Cor. 10:20, 21. It is a fact that the early Christians called the pagan power the devil; and they rightly named it, for it was the principal agent through which the old fiend deceived the world, and opposed the church of God in primitive days.

At the ushering in of this gospel dispensation, paganism was the universal religion, with the exception of the Jews—a mere handful of Roman subjects. Paganism held the highest position on earth when Christ appeared to save the world. But he who is called Michael, because he is like God, and his angels (messengers—holy ministry) waged war against this dragon in his high places. Being victorious, Michael proved to the world that heathenism had no

right to such a high seat. Christ cast the devil down, and set his own kingdom up instead.

It is said that "the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." This refers to the bitter opposition heathen Rome waged against Christianity. "His angels" refer to the advocates and adherents of paganism. Heathenism and Christianity stood in direct opposition. But, thank God, "the great dragon was cast out"; Christianity prevailed.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Here is given the reason why the followers of Christ prevailed at this time against all their adversaries. It was because they fought against the dragon in the armor of God. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," by proclaiming salvation to sinners through Christ crucified, and by their continual intercessions at the throne of grace for the conversion of the heathen world. All this they did at the peril of their lives. Never before in the history of the world was a kingdom established with such conquering power. Never did an army go forth with such weapons of warfare. Rome fought

with the sword, cross, fagot, and wild beasts of the earth. The Christians' only weapons were the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. They testified the gospel of Christ wherever they went. The Roman hosts fought with swords of steel, while the Christians fought with the sword of the Spirit. Thank God! "they overcame." When the pagans took a Christian to the stake, and the flames were taking his life away, he testified that the blood of Jesus saved him. The Christians never lifted their hands in rebellion, but submitted calmly to death, testifying to salvation through the blood. The dying testimony of one Christian would often convert a large number of pagans. Thus the blood of the Lamb set forth in testimony slaughtered pagans faster than it was possible to slaughter Christians. The time came when the Christians far outnumbered the pagans, and the latter threw down their arms and desired admittance into the church. Had not an apostasy taken place, the world would have been swept to God.

Christianity prevailed. That stone smote the image and broke it to pieces. Rome tottered and finally fell, A. D. 476. When Christianity

thus prevailed, the hosts of heaven and of earth were heard to shout, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." This is a song of triumph of the Christian church over heathen idolatry, and is very expressive of the great joy of the Christians upon this most stupendous event. John heard this in heaven, but in reality it took place upon earth.

This great rejoicing of the early church was because the "accuser of the brethren" was cast down, who accused them day and night. Whenever famine, pestilence, or any other calamity befell the pagans, they blamed the Christians. If a fire broke out in their city, the responsibility was laid on the Christians, and they were slaughtered by the thousand. No wonder there was a shout of joy when that power was broken.

I quote from Buller's Ecclesiastical History, page 40: "The final victory of Christianity over heathenism and Judaism and the mixed empire of the ancient world, a victory gained without physical force by the marvelous power of faith and the perseverance of faith and love, is one of the sublimest spectacles of history and

one of the strongest evidences of the divinity and the indestructible life of our holy religion."

Tertullian, who wrote about the end of the second century, says in his Apology: "We are a people of yesterday, and yet we have filled every place belonging to you [the pagans]—cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camp, your tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum. We leave to you your temples alone. We can count your armies: our numbers in a single province will be greater. We have it in our power, without arms and without rebellion, to fight against you with the weapon of a simple divorce. We can leave you to wage your wars alone. If such a multitude should draw into some remote corner of the world, you doubtless would tremble at your own solitude and ask, 'Of whom are we the govenors?' Your cruelty avails you nothing. . . The faster you mow us down, the more in numbers we grow. The blood of Christians is seed. What you call our obstinacy is an instructor. For who that sees it does not inquire for what we suffer? Who that inquires does not embrace our doctrine? Who that embraces it is not ready

to give his blood for the fulness of God's grace?"

It is further said that when the dragon found himself cast out "he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." This refers to the pagan persecutions. When Rome saw her religion crumbling under the increasing light of Christianity, she tried to save herself by slaughtering the Christians; but where one saint sealed his testimony with his blood, ten took his place. Watch-fires were kindled in every land, and finally Rome went to pieces.

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." Rev. 12:14. This wilderness is the same as that of verse 6, which refers to the great apostasy of the church.

This same great conflict and victory of the church over paganism is brought to view in Revelation 20: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand

years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." Verses 1-3. This scripture, no doubt, has been more speculated upon than any other in the Bible. It is used as a foundation for all the multiplied absurdities and diversities of false doctrines respecting a fancied millennium future.

In order to prop up a corrupt theory, many men and women will, in their blind zeal, set aside the plain testimony of New-Testament scripture and literalize this text. But no such thing is hinted at as a future literal reign upon earth. If the reader will closely compare Rev. 20:1-3 with Rev. 12:7-11, he will observe that the same event is referred to in both passages. The angel is a symbol of the host of Christians, especially the ministers. They possess the keys of the kingdom and have power to bind and loose, to lock and unlock. At most, this angel's having the keys of the pit symbolize its power and authority. As the ministers stand for the whole church, this angel that came down from heaven is Christianity in her virgin pu-

rity. Christianity came from heaven; paganism came from hell. So in this symbol we have these two powers brought face to face in awful conflict.

The language of this text is highly figurative. The dragon here referred to is the same as that in Revelation 12; namely, pagan Rome. There is but one dragon brought to view in the book of Revelation—the dragon with seven heads and ten horns (12:3). That dragon represents Rome under the pagan religion. The appellations "Devil" and "Satan" are applied to this hellish power both in Revelation 12 and 20. We have before observed why these terms were applied to paganism—because its religion was purely of devilish origin, and because it was the chief instrument through which the devil deceived the whole then-known world. When this power ruled the earth, and its religion was universal, Christianity, like an angel of mercy from heaven, came to earth and established a kingdom of righteousness and peace in direct opposition to the dragon-power of paganism. With the great chain of gospel truth Christianity bound the dragon and hurled it from its lofty position to the great abyss from which it ema-

nated. After paganism under the Roman power had been cast down by Christianity, it no longer deceived the nations. During the dark days that followed the morning-light age of the church, the nations were deceived by another power—a corrupt and hellish religion labeled Christian, symbolized by a beast.

The one thousand years signify the long period of time when paganism as a religion was largely extinct.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." Rev. 20:4. John saw this after the angel came down and while he was binding the dragon. Like Rev. 12:10, this refers to the triumph of the early church over heathen darkness; the glory of Christ's kingdom before the apostasy. Through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit multitudes were raised up from a dead state in sin to life in Christ. This great host thus quickened into life in the clear morning of the Christian era composed the first great spiritual resurrection. Through full salvation they were made kings and priests unto God; and, sitting upon thrones of love, they reigned "in life" over sin, Satan, and disease. Judgment

was given to them. This refers to the righteous judgments of God which filled the early church.

Thus, in brief, we trace the church through her first great conflict with ecclesiastical powers, and behold her sweep onward with triumph over all her foes. As we follow her to the end of the world, we give a history of events which should awaken a deep interest in the minds and hearts of all.

"No one takes much interest in the history of the world before the coming of Christ. The old dynasties of Babylon, Media, Assyria, are but dim specters lost in the remoteness of the long-forgotten past. Though the Christian lingers with solemn pleasure over the faintly revealed scenes of patriarchal life, still he feels but little personal interest in the gorgeous empires which rise and disappear before him in those remote times, in spectral visions, like the genii of an Arabian tale. Thebes, Palmyra, Nineveh — palatial mansions once lined their streets, and pride and opulence thronged their dwellings: but their ruins have faded away, their rocky sepulchers are swept clean by the winds of centuries; and none but a few anti-

quarians now care to know of their prosperity and adversity, of their pristine grandeur and their present decay.

"All this is changed since the coming of Christ. Nineteen centuries ago a babe was born in the stable of an inn, in the Roman province of Judea. The life of that babe has stamped a new impress upon the history of the world. When the child Jesus was born, all the then-known nations of the earth were in subjection to one government—that of Rome. The Atlantic Ocean was an unexplored sea, whose depths no mariner ever ventured to penetrate. The Indias had but a shadowy and almost fabulous existence. Rumor said, that over the wild, unexplored wastes of interior Asia, fierce tribes wandered, sweeping to and fro, like demons of darkness; and marvelous stories were told of their monstrous aspect and fiend-like ferocity. The Mediterranean Sea, then the largest body of water really known upon the globe, was but a Roman lake. It was the central portion of the Roman empire. Around its shores were clustered the thronged provinces and the majestic cities which gave Rome celebrity above all previous dynasties, and which invested the

empire of the Cæsars with fame that no modern kingdom, empire, or republic, has been able to eclipse.

"A few years before the birth of Christ, Julius Cæsar perished in the senate chamber at Rome, pierced by the daggers of Brutus and other assassins. At the great victory of Pharsalia, Cæsar had struck down his only rival, Pompey, and had concentrated the power of the world in his single hand. His nephew, Octavius, the second Cæsar, surnamed Augustus, or the August, was, at the time Jesus was born, the monarch of the world. Notwithstanding a few nominal restraints, he was an absolute sovereign, without any constitutional checks. It is not too much to say that his power was unlimited. He could do what he pleased with the property, liberty, and the life of every man, woman, and child of more than three hundred millions, composing the Roman empire. Such power no mortal had ever swayed before. Little did this Roman emperor imagine, as he sat enthroned in his gorgeous palace upon the Capitoline Hill, that a babe slumbering in a manger at Bethlehem, an obscure hamlet in the remote province of Syria, and whose infant wailings

perhaps blended with the bleating of the goats or the lowing of the kine, was to establish an empire, before which all the power of the Cæsars was to dwindle into insignificance.

"But so it was, Jesus the babe of Bethlehem, has become, beyond all others, whether philosophers, warriors, or kings, the most conspicuous being who ever trod this globe. Before the name of Jesus of Nazareth all others fade away. Uneducated, he has introduced principles which have overthrown the proudest system of ancient philosophy. By the utterance of a few words, all of which can be written on half a dozen pages, *he has demolished all the pagan systems which pride and passion and power had then enthroned.* The Roman gods and goddesses—Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Bacchus, Diana—have fled before the approach of the religion of Jesus, as fabled specters vanish before the dawn. Jesus, the 'Son of man' and 'Son of God,' has introduced a system of religion so comprehensive, that it is adapted to every conceivable situation in life; so simple, that the most unlearned, and even children, can comprehend it. This babe of Bethlehem, whose words were so few, whose brief life was so soon ended,

and whose sacrificial death upon the cross was so wonderful, though dead, still lives and reigns in this world—a monarch more influential than any other, or all other sovereigns upon the globe. His empire has advanced majestically, with ever-increasing power, down the path of eighteen centuries.

"The Cæsars have perished, and their palaces are in ruins. The empire of Charlemagne has risen, like one of those gorgeous clouds we often admire, brilliant with the radiance of the setting sun; and like that cloud, it has vanished forever. Charles V has marshaled the armies of Europe around his throne, and has almost rivaled the Cæsars in the majesty of his sway; and, like a dream, the vision of his universal empire has fled. But the kingdom of Jesus has survived all these wrecks of empires. Without a palace or a court; without a bayonet or a saber; without any emoluments of rank or wealth or power offered by Jesus to his subjects, his kingdom has advanced steadily, resistlessly, increasing in strength every hour, crushing all opposition, triumphing over all time's changes; so that, at the present moment, the kingdom of Jesus is a stronger kingdom,

more potent in all the elements of influence over the human heart, than all other governments of earth.

"There is not a man upon this globe who would now lay down his life from love for any one of the numerous monarchs of Rome; but there are thousands who would go joyfully to the dungeon or the stake from love for that Jesus who commenced his earthly career in the manger of a country inn, whose whole life was but a scene of poverty and suffering, and who finally perished upon the cross in the endurance of a cruel death with malefactors.

"As this child, from the period of whose birth time itself is now dated, was passing through the season of infancy and childhood, naval fleets swept the Mediterranean Sea, and Roman legions trampled bloodily over subjugated provinces. There were conflagrations of cities, ravages of fields, fierce battles, slaughter, misery, and death. Nearly all these events are now forgotten; but the name of Jesus of Nazareth grows more lustrous as the ages roll on."—Abbott's History of Christianity.

The Government of the Church.

The government of the church of God is a theocracy. God himself works "all in all" the members. It will be remembered that this was God's plan under the legal dispensation. He said to Israel, "I am your King," and it was his design to be the supreme king and governor of his people in that dispensation. But the Israelites rebelled and took the government out of his hands and set over them earthly kings and rulers. It was prophesied that in this dispensation of divine grace the God of heaven would set up an everlasting kingdom, and in that kingdom he reigns supreme, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is declared to be the King of saints.

As he is king and head over all things to the church, the government necessarily rests upon his shoulders. Accordingly, we read, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his govern-

ment and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Isa. 9:6, 7. Here it will be seen that the new-testament church has government, but that Christ himself is the governor of his people. "The government shall be upon his shoulder." He is the chief shepherd, the ruler, the head, "that in all things he might have the preeminence."

As governor and head of his church, he has given us a perfect law. That law is the truth, the gospel. The church of God is a divine institution; hence the divine law which the Lord has given is sufficient for its government. So there is no excuse for the modern creeds of men. Modern sects are of human origin and hence need human, or man-made, rules or discipline. But had the church of God needed more than the New Testament, the allwise Lawgiver would certainly have given us more. Modern creeds and disciplines being the products of men who are fallible, they are very imperfect and need revision. So from time to time, sectarians meet in conference, synod, or presbytery, and change and revise their articles of faith to suit the

times. But the divine law which governs the true church of God being perfect, it needs no revision. It remains forever the same. So in discarding all the creeds of men and accepting, teaching, and practising the whole truth contained in the gospel of Christ, we have the same perfect rule of faith, the same government and discipline, that was enjoined upon the primitive Christians. This is government divine.

The Lord by his Spirit calls and qualifies certain ones for the work of the ministry. These he places in authority in his church, and they execute his law. In this sense "governments" are placed within the church (1 Cor. 12:28). But those who feel this responsibility and labor in such capacity labor under the direction and guidance of the Chief Shepherd, the Chief Governor of his people. God's ministers are only under-shepherds, and what government is administered, and whatever law is enforced by them, is simply by the direction of him upon whom the real government of the church rests and who works "all in all" the members.

Classification of the Primitive Ministry.

The whole ministry of the church of God is classified by the apostle Paul as follows: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Eph. 4:11-14. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. 12:28.

The ministers classified in these two scriptures are identical. They are properly divided into two classes—traveling and local. Traveling preachers plant churches and water the

same; while the local, shepherd and feed the flocks. All these gifts were necessary to the perfect government of the early church, and they are just as necessary today. Whatever was essential then is essential now.

As before stated, the early ministry were properly divided into two classes—local and traveling. The term "elder" applies in Scripture to both the traveling and the local ministry. First, to the traveling. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed." 1 Pet. 5:1. "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth." 2 John 1. "The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth." 3 John 1. Secondly, to the local. "And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in ev-

ery church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Acts 14: 21-23. "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." Tit. 1: 4, 5.

They ordained elders in every church—in every city. These were the local ministers who cared for and fed the flock. But Paul and John were both traveling preachers. They were apostles, and each testified to being an elder. If Paul and John were elders, then all God's preachers are elders, all on one common plane. But some may object that "elder" simply means "older one," and that therefore elders are a class of officers selected from among the older ones to form a sort of Sanhedrin. No such thought is conveyed in the New-Testament Scriptures. Though the word literally rendered is "older one," yet in the New Testament it is used in an official sense, not in its literal sense, and applies to the sacred calling and office of a min-

ister. In Moses' church under the Old Testament not all the older men of Israel were termed "the elders of the people," but a large number (seventy) of men of sound wisdom and judgment were selected and these sat as a Sanhedrin. These were the elders of Israel. Under the New Testament the term "elder," as before observed, applies to all the ministry, but they must be men and women of sound judgment and wisdom, and fully anointed by divine power to be "able ministers of the new testament."

The traveling preachers are classified as "apostles" and "evangelists." Who were the apostles? God gave "some apostles," "first apostles." The first twelve ministers chosen by Jesus Christ to be the first propagators of his kingdom among the lost sheep of the house of Israel were called apostles. "And when it was day he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." Luke 6:13. These twelve were to be eye-witnesses of his personal work on earth and also of his resurrection from the dead. When one was chosen to take the place of Judas, he had to be one who had accompanied Jesus Christ

in his personal ministry and had been a witness of his resurrection. "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." Acts 1: 20-26.

Through their labors, inspiration, and writings, the New Testament has come to us. Therefore these twelve form a perpetual foundation in the church (Rev. 21: 14; Eph. 2: 20). Such a thing, however, as a succession of the number

twelve is simply Mormon fiction, invented by Joe Smith, who was filled with "visions of his own head."

Jesus Christ was called an apostle because he was sent forth from God to accomplish the redemption of man (Heb. 3:1, 2). Paul and Barnabas were called apostles because they were the first to plant the Christian faith among the Gentile nations. "But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost. And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the

city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles." Acts 13:50-52; 14:1-4. "Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out." Acts 14:14.

"James, the Lord's brother," was called an apostle. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." Gal. 1:18, 19. Silvanus and Timotheus were apostles. "Paul and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ." 1 Thess. 1:1; 2:6. Apollos was an apostle. "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For I think that God hath

set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and angels, and to men." 1 Cor. 4:6, 9.

Here we have clear proof of at least twenty who were called apostles in the early church. It is evident from a careful reading of the New Testament that there were many more in whom the gift of apostleship was manifested.

From the testimony of Scripture it is clear that an apostle was a planter. The word is defined by Webster as "one who first plants the Christian faith." We will select the apostle Paul as an example. He says, in his epistle to the Corinthians, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." 1 Cor. 3:6. By this he means that he was the instrument God used to plant the Corinthian church. This is proved in Acts 18:1, 4-11: "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they

opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered in a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." This made him their apostle. He says, "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." 1 Cor. 9:2. "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." 1 Cor. 4:15. Through Paul's labors the Corinthian church was established. Hence he says, "I planted" you; and

if not an apostle unto others, "I am to you"; for I have begotten you through the gospel, and the seal of mine apostleship "are ye in the Lord." He further testifies to them, "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." 2 Cor. 12:12.

From the foregoing we learn that apostles in the early church were not a separate class of officers who stood above the rest, but were gifted men. Apostleship was not an office of itself, but was a gift of the Spirit in the ministry; apostles were men who were specially endued with the various gifts of the Spirit, which qualified them to enter new fields of labor and plant the truth, plant churches. This meant more than simply getting a company of believers raised up. They were gifted so that they could confirm and establish such assemblies in faith, truth, and holiness, and lead them into the various gifts necessary to make their local work effectual. Paul had a general "care of all the churches"; that is, he felt the responsibility of the work in general.

But were there to be elders in the church in these last days qualified with the gifts to do the

work of apostles? Yes. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." Rev. 18: 20. In this evening time when Babylon should fall, there were to be apostles who would rejoice over her downfall.

The other traveling elders were termed "evangelists." "And some evangelists." Eph. 4: 11. Philip was called "the evangelist" (Acts 21: 8). Paul exhorted Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4: 2). The real work of evangelists is seen in 1 Cor. 3: 6: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." Their work was usually to labor among churches already established, to stir up the revival spirit among them, and to water the saints —refresh them. But in the church of God, while these gifts were given "to profit withal," there was nothing legalistic, as in sectism today. An apostle could "do the work of an evangelist." Both Apollos and Timothy were apostles, but they did some evangelizing too. Such sometimes went into new fields and planted churches, as Philip the evangelist at Samaria; and the apostles came and established them, as Peter and John did (Acts 8).

This gives us a brief idea of the work of the traveling elders. The apostles entered new fields and preached the gospel, God working with them and confirming the word with signs following. Under their labors churches were planted. The Lord held them responsible for the welfare of those assemblies until local officers had been raised up and everything "set in order." Sometimes it was necessary for the apostle to remain in such fields of labor for years. For a minister to plant a church and then run off and leave it without a spiritual father's care and proper shepherding is to work contrary to God's plan. Such work brings disaster. A careful reading of the Acts will show that the apostles remained at Jerusalem for a long period of time. Paul abode for a number of years at some places in order to establish the work; at other points he left workers, as Titus in Crete (see Tit. 1:4, 5).

The local elders are termed "pastors" and "teachers." Eph. 4:11. A plurality of elders were ordained in some of the larger local assemblies. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on

whom they believed." Acts 14:23. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." Tit. 1:5. "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church." Acts 20:17. "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present." Acts 21:17, 18. You will notice that in the different churches they ordained *elders*. The last two texts clearly show a plurality of them in the church at Jerusalem and also at Ephesus.

They were the overseers of the assemblies. Their work is clearly set forth in the following texts: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20: 17, 28. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock

of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock." 1 Pet. 5:1-3. Their work was feeding the church, ministering to them the word of life, taking the oversight, caring for the little ones, and protecting them from the impositions of the devil through heresy of false teachers.

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men." 1 Thess. 5:11-15. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Heb. 13:

7. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Heb. 13:17. These texts clearly set forth the responsible work of the local elders. Comments can not make them clearer.

Another work of these elders is seen in Jas. 5:14, 15: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Jer. 3:15. "And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord." Jer. 23:4. We will here insert a quotation from the early writings on this point: "Let the presbyters [elders] be compassionate and merciful to all, bringing back those that

wander, visiting all the sick, and not neglecting the widow, the orphan, or the poor, but always providing for that which is becoming in the sight of God and of man; abstaining from all wrath, respect of persons, and unjust judgment; keeping far off from all covetousness, not quickly crediting an evil report against any one, not severe in judgment."—Epistle of Polycarp, Chap. VI. While a quotation from history, this clearly sets forth the work of the new-testament elders. At a glance any one can see the need of such work in every assembly. Feeding and caring for the flock does not include merely preaching the word, but visiting the brethren, praying with them, calling upon the sick and poor, and ministering to them. How simple the plan of apostolic government and yet how well arranged by the infinite wisdom of him who worketh "all in all"!

As before observed, Paul divides these elders into two classes—pastors and teachers. These do not form two classes of officers. There was but one "office of a bishop" (1 Tim. 3:1, 2). There was only the one office for the local elders —bishops—that of overseers. But their gifts were not all the same. "Let the elders that

rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." 1 Tim. 5:17. The reader can easily observe that Paul speaks of some elders who labored in word and doctrine and of others who did not; some who were public preachers—pastors—others who were not preachers, yet were men of faith, good judgment and wisdom; men able in private to teach and instruct in the ways of salvation. The latter are the teachers. This distinction is made in Rom. 12:6-8: "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."

The qualifications of Bible elders—bishops—are found in the following texts: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one

wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Tit. 1:5-11. "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre: but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest

he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." 1 Tim. 3:2-7.

Among the early ministers were a class of men with the gift of prophecy. They were known as "prophets." "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul." Acts 13:1. The work of the prophets and their office are clearly seen in the following scriptures: "And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar." Acts 11:27, 28. "And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." Acts 21:10, 11.

It has been thought by some that there is no need of prophets under the new covenant; but the above texts prove that there were prophets in the church before the apostasy, and God has them in his church today. These may be among either the traveling or the local ministry. There were a number of prophets in the church at Antioch. Prophets also traveled, as Agabus. Philip the evangelist "had four daughters which did prophesy."

One work of a prophet was foretelling events. Agabus signified by the Spirit that there would be a dearth throughout the whole land, and, we are told, "it came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar." Agabus was a true prophet of God. It was he who also foretold what would befall the apostle Paul at Jerusalem. But the work of the prophets included more than foretelling future events. "Though I have the *gift of prophecy,* and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge." 1 Cor. 13:2. Here we see that there was a special gift of prophecy, which unraveled deep mysteries and gave knowledge. Those who possessed this gift were able to interpret prophecy by the Spirit of God. Since we have returned in these last days to the mount

of holiness and truth, the spirit of prophecy is again manifested among God's ministry. We sit with awe and listen to God's prophets as they unravel the mysteries of prophecy and revelation.

Having briefly considered both the traveling and the local ministry who were termed "elders," we will now consider another class of officers called "deacons." "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 3: 8-13.

"The office of a deacon." This language implies that in the early church there was a class of officers by that name. Deacon is from *diakonos,* which signifies a minister or servant. Its

literal meaning would cover both those who minister the word and such as minister in temporal affairs; both to those who serve in the gospel and those who serve in temporal things; that is, dealing out food to the hungry and looking after the temporal needs of the church. The real office of a deacon evidently has to do with the latter. Our reasons for believing so are these: All those who are ministers of the word, both traveling and local, are officially called "elders." The office of a deacon is a separate office from that of elders. Therefore those who minister in the temporal affairs of the church are officially termed "deacons." Some of those officially appointed deacons, however, may minister the word, as did Stephen at Jerusalem.

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom

we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed they laid their hands on them." Acts 6:1-6. These are generally referred to as deacons. When the church at Jerusalem was scattered on account of the persecution, then Philip, one of the seven, started into the ministry and was successful as an evangelist.

The Humble Equality of the Apostolic Ministry.

Jesus set the standard of humble equality. "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Matt. 23:8. "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Matt. 23:10-12. "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth." Luke 22:24-27.

Oh, what humbleness is here taught! "Ye are brethren." No one among you is higher than another or can possibly have from me any

jurisdiction over the rest. Ye are, in this respect, perfectly equal. He showed them how the Gentiles exalted some above others, but said, "It shall not be so among you."

I will here insert a few extracts from history. "The church was in the beginning a community of brethren. All its members were taught of God, and each possessed the liberty of drawing for himself from the divine fountain of life. The epistles, which then settled the great questions of doctrine, did not bear the pompous title of any single man or ruler. We find from the Holy Scriptures that they began simply with these words: 'The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren.' Acts 15:23. But the writings of these very apostles forewarn us that from the midst of these brethren, there shall arise a power which shall overthrow this simple and primitive order."—D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, book I, chap. I.

"The doctrine of 'the church,' and of 'the necessity for its visible unity,' which had gained footing so early as the third century, favored the pretensions of Rome. The great bond which originally bound together the members of the

church was a living faith in the heart, by which all were joined to Christ as their own head. But various causes erelong conspired to originate and develop the idea of the necessity for some exterior fellowship. Men, accustomed to the associations and political forms of an earthly country, carried their views and habits into the spiritual and everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ. The invisible and spiritual church was identical with the visible and outward community. But soon a great distinction appeared —the form and vital principle parted asunder. The semblance of identical and external organization was gradually substituted in place of the internal and spiritual unity which is the very essence of a religion proceeding from God. Men suffered the precious perfume of faith to escape while they bowed themselves before the empty vase that held it. Faith in the heart no longer knit together in one the members of the church. Then it united by means of bishops, archbishops, popes, miters, ceremonies, and canons. The living church retiring by degrees to the lonely sanctuary of a few solitary souls— an exterior church was substituted in place of it, and installed in all its forms as of divine

institution. . . . In the beginning of the gospel, whosoever had received the Spirit of Jesus Christ was esteemed a member of the church. Now the order was inverted, and no one unless a member of the church was counted to have received the Spirit of Jesus Christ."

"It is a noteworthy fact, when the founder of Christianity left the world, he made no provision for any quarterly, or annual, or periodical assembly of his apostles, his ministers, or his followers; he appointed no time nor place for them to congregate, to report, confer, or legislate; he gave to no one authority to convoke such an assembly; and he gave his disciples no reason to suppose that five thousand Christians assembled had greater authority than two or three who had met in his name, in whose midst he promised to be. And so far from empowering his followers to combine and legislate for themselves or their associates, he expressly defined their duties to be, not the contriving and imposing of new precepts upon the church, but rather the making of disciples among all nations, 'teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.'

"The apostles and early church seemed to

understand their duties, and carefully refrained from meddling with such affairs, or setting up courts or ecclesiastical judicatures, and even when consulted by the Gentile converts who were afflicted by intrusion of proselyting Jews, they only rehearsed a few 'necessary things,' for their observance; things that had been regarded as obligatory from the times of Noah down; and declined to undertake anything analogous to the ecclesiastical legislation of the present day. And so the apostles parted, and went forth, probably never expecting to meet again until 'the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering unto him.' The servants of God were attending to their proper work of preaching the gospel, feeding the flock, and saving men; and it was not until religious apostasy and imperial power and patronage combined to corrupt and impair the integrity of the church, that the work of calling councils and legislating for the church of God commenced."—Who Made the New Testament? pages 3, 4.

In the foregoing we see, according to the testimony of history, the equality of the early ministry and their humbleness. If there was such a thing in the early church as one class of preachers

being above the rest and exercising lordship over them, such arrangement was in direct opposition to the teaching of Christ; for he positively taught them, "It shall not be so among you," but "All ye are brethren." But the early church started in with an equality of the ministry. The above quotations from history clearly set forth the standard. All the preachers were officially called "elders," and all were on the same plane.

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: . . . neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Pet. 5:1, 3. The following is an extract from Adam Clark's comments on this text: "In this text, the term *presbuteros* (elders or presbyters) is the name of an office. They were as pastors or shepherds of the flock of God, the Christian people among whom they lived. *They were the same as bishops* . . . and teachers. That these were the same as bishops the next verse proves. 'Who also am an elder'—*presbuteros*. One on a level with yourselves."

"Neither as being lords over God's heritage." According to Paul, there are to be no lords over God's heritage; the bishops and presbyters, who are appointed by the head of the church (Christ), are to feed the flock; to guide and to defend it, not to fleece and waste it; and they are to look for their reward in another world, and the approbation of God in their consciences. In humility, self-abasement, self-renunciation, and heavenly-mindedness, they are to be ensamples—types—to the flock; molds of a heavenly form, into which the spirit and lives of the flock may be cast, so that they may come out after a perfect pattern. We need not ask, Does the church that arrogates to itself the exclusive title of Catholic, and do its supreme pastors, who affect to be the successors of Peter and the vicars of Jesus Christ, act in this way? They are in every sense the reverse of this. But we may ask, Do the other churches (meaning the Protestant sects), which profess to be reformed from the abominations of the above, follow the advice of the apostle? Have they pastors according to God's own heart, who feed them with knowledge and understanding? Do they not feed themselves instead of the flock?

are they not lords over the heritage of Christ, ruling with a high ecclesiastico-secular hand?

The above cuts a clear line of distinction between the modern lords of Babylon and the humble, equal ministry of the early church. The apostle Peter placed himself on a common level with the local presbyters, and also stated that he was a fellow presbyter. In the New Testament "bishop" and "elder" are terms used interchangeably and applied to the same class of officers—the ministers.

Bishop. "In the primitive church, a spiritual overseer; an elder or presbyter; one who has the pastoral care of a church."—Webster.

"The same persons are called elders and presbyters, and overseers and bishops."—Scott, Com.

"Till the churches were multiplied (and apostatized), the bishops and presbyters were the same."—Ibid.

"Both the Greek and Latin Fathers do, with one consent, declare that bishops were called presbyters and presbyters bishops in apostolic times, the name being then common."—Whitbey.

"It appears that those who are called elders

in this place [Tit. 1:5] are the same as those termed bishops in verse 7. We have many proofs that bishops and elders were of the same order in the apostolic church, though afterward they became distinct."—Adam Clark.

"The rulers of the church were called their presbyters or bishops, which two titles are, in the New Testament, undoubtedly applied to the same order of men. . . . Let no one confound the bishops of this primitive and golden period of the church with those of whom we read in the following ages. For, though they were both distinguished by the same name, yet they differed extremely, and that in many respects."—Mosheim, vol. I, page 99.

"It is also true that in the earliest government of the first Christian society, that of Jerusalem, not the elders only, but the 'whole church' were associated with the apostles; and it is even certain that the terms 'bishop' and 'elder' or 'presbyter' were, in the first instances, and for a short period, sometimes used synonomously, and indiscriminately applied to the same order in the ministry."—Waddington's Church History, part I, page 41.

"The earliest Christian communities appear

to have been ruled and represented, in the absence of the apostle who was their first founder, by their elders, who are likewise called bishops, or overseers of the church."—Millman's History of Christianity, page 194.

Kurtz, in his Church History, says: "To aid them in their work, or to supply their places in their absence (Acts 14:23), the apostles ordained rulers in every church, who bore the common name of elders from their dignity, and of bishops from the nature of their office. That originally the elders were the same as the bishops, we gather with absolute certainly from the statements of the New Testament and Clement of Rome, a disciple of the apostles. (See his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapters 42, 44). The presbyters are expressly called bishops—compare [the Greek especially] Acts 20:17 with verse 28, and Tit. 1:5 with verse 7. The office of presbyter is described as next to and highest after the apostles (Acts 15:6, 22). Similarly, the elders are represented as those to whom alone the rule, the teaching, and the care of the church is entrusted (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:1, etc.). . . . In several passages of the New Testament and of Clement we read of many

bishops in one and the same church. In the face of such indubitable evidence, it is difficult to account for the pertinacity with which Romish and Anglican theologians insist that these two offices had from the first been different in name and functions. . . . Even Jerome, Augustine, Urban II, and Petrus Lombardes admit that originally the two had been identical. It was reserved for the Council of Trent to convert this truth into a heresy."—Ibid., pages 67, 68.

"The church was in the beginning a community of brethren, guided by a few of the brethren." "All Christians were priests of the living God, with humble pastors as their guides."—D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, vol. I, pages 35, 50.

To the above we heartily say, Amen. Bishop and elder were the same till the mystery of iniquity began to work. The traveling preachers were bishops. "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take." Acts 1:20. Bishopric is the office of a bishop. Judas, then, was a bishop, but by transgression he fell. So Matthias was chosen to take his bishopric—his office of bishop.

This proves beyond question that all the twelve were properly called bishops. This included Peter and John, who also were called elders (1 Pet. 5:1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1). So the terms "bishop" and "elder" are used interchangeably, and apply to all the traveling ministers. All the local preachers were bishops. "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Phil. 1:1. Thus when Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, he addressed all the saints, "with the bishops and deacons." He did not say with bishops, elders, and deacons; but recognized only two classes of officers—bishops and deacons. A plurality of elders were ordained in "every church" (Acts 14:23). Therefore Paul terms these elders, bishops. Bishop and elder, then, are the same in Scripture. There were but two classes of officers in the church at Philippi: bishops—the ministers of the word of truth, and overseers of the flock; and deacons—the ministers of the temporal affairs of the church. Anything more than this is apostasy.

On this text Adam Clark remarks: "*Bishops* —the overseers of the church of God, and those

who ministered to the poor and preached occasionally. There has been a great deal of paper wasted in the inquiry, 'Who are meant by bishops here? as no place could have more than one bishop.' . . . This is the extravagance of trifle. I believe no such officer is meant as we now term bishop." This is clear. Adam Clark readily admits that New-Testament bishops were only overseers—common preachers. He further states that it is "a waste of paper" to try to prove that only one bishop can be in an assembly. It is "the extravagance of trifle." He understood that the modern office of bishop was unknown in the apostolic church. These are his words: "I believe no such officer is meant as we now term bishop." Amen.

The very language of Tit. 1:4-7 proves that elders and bishops were the same. "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or

unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre." Language could not be plainer. Paul left Titus in Crete to ordain elders in every city. He says, "If any be blameless," "for a bishop must be blameless." When Paul sent to Ephesus, he did not call the bishop and his presbytery, but simply called "the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17). All the ministers in that assembly were simply elders, made overseers by the Holy Ghost (Acts 20:28). When the apostles set churches in order, they did not ordain one bishop, and his presbytery, but simply "ordained elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). Paul did not instruct Titus to ordain one bishop and a presbytery of elders for his sanhedrin in every city in Crete, but left him to simply "ordain elders in every city."

At Philippi there was no such thing as a single bishop, and a lower class called elders, and a still lower class called deacons; but there were only two classes of officers—bishops and deacons (Phil. 1:1). Did the church at Antioch send Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to consult the bishop, the apostles, and the elders

about circumcision? No; they simply sent them "to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question" (Acts 15:2). Nothing is said of the bishop. When they reached Jerusalem, "they were received of the church and of the apostles and elders" (verse 4). The bishop was left out. Why? They did not have such a high officer over them. That church was pure from the mystery of iniquity. "But," says one, "James was a bishop." James was an apostle (Gal. 1:19); hence he was no more a bishop than was Peter or any other of the apostles. Who came together to consider the matter? The bishop (James), the apostles, and the elders? No; it does not read that way. "And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." Acts 15:6. No mention is made of a bishop presiding in this apostolic assembly. Only apostles and elders are mentioned. As before proved, all the apostles were bishops, and all the elders were bishops. The apostles were the traveling elders or bishops, while the others were the local elders or bishops. Peter and James spoke in this assembly, as they were looked upon by the church as "pillars" (Gal. 2:9). But James was only

an apostle or elder in the church at Jerusalem. He probably was a senior elder, as is inferred from Acts 21:18.

"But," says one, "was not the angel of the church at Ephesus, a bishop over the rest?" (Rev. 2:1.) No; for had they had an officer above the common elders, called the bishop, when Paul called them together, as recorded in Acts 20:17 he would have mentioned the bishop. But he simply called "the elders." They were all elders—overseers. No doubt there was, however, one who was a senior elder, or one among the elders who especially ministered the Word and took the special care of the church upon himself or herself. There was not a bishop above the rest, for they were all on the same level—all elders (Acts 20:17, 28). This humble equality of the early ministry lasted but a very short time.

The Great Apostasy Foretold.

The clear morning glory of the church did not last long. It was foreseen that a great apostasy would come. The early ministers went forth with the knowledge that a long dark night of superstition, error, and persecution lay before them.

Jesus foretold this reign of deception and warned the church. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. 7:15, 16. "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." Matt. 24:5. As you see, this reign of deception was not to be merely local but universal. "Many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24:11, 12. "If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Verse 24.

Paul gave to the church the following warning and prediction of this great apostasy: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the

flock: also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Acts 20: 29-31. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter days some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." 1 Tim. 4: 1-3. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4: 3, 4.

Peter foretold this time in the following language: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift

destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." 2 Pet. 2:1-3.

The foregoing texts foretell an awful reign of darkness and deception to come upon the church, a time when false prophets would deceive many by turning their hearts away from the truth. These false teachers would bring in damnable heresies, and many would follow their pernicious ways; and because iniquity should abound, the love of many would wax cold. What an awful picture, and yet how true! The very things predicted came to pass.

It Came Early in the Christian Era.

"The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary." Isa. 63:18. The "little while" in which God's people were to possess true holiness was the early morning of the Christian era. Had the church always retained holiness, there would never have been an apostasy. But by descending from this lofty plane she opened the way for every species of false doctrine and error. The result was that the enemies of truth trod down the sanctuary—the church. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." 2 John 7. "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us:

but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." 1 John 2:18, 19. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." 2 Thess. 2:7.

From these texts we clearly learn that the way was paved for the reign of Antichrist at a very early date. In A. D. 54 "the mystery of iniquity" was at work. In A. D. 90 John testified that already many Antichrists were working, that many false teachers had entered the world, and that some had gone out from among them; namely, separated from the established church and gone off into heresy. It is very clear that at a very early date true holiness was lost sight of and that the way was being laid for a dark reign of sin and corruption. Many heresies arose one after another, and finally these grew into an awful beast-power—*the papacy.*

The Falling Away.

The falling away was foretold in the following language: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he is taken out of the way." "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned

who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2:1-4, 7, 9-12.

Some of the Thessalonian brethren, it seems, had an idea that the second advent of Christ would take place in their day; but the apostle disabused their minds of that idea by assuring them that before that day there would come a falling away. What can this mean but an apostasy, a retrogration from the pure apostolic plane? The apostles saw this thing only a little way ahead of them. This falling away is the same as that predicted in 1 Tim. 4:1-3, where it is said, "Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." "The faith once delivered to the saints" was the pure faith of the gospel. This faith taught but one God, but one Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:5, 6). At a very early time heresies were introduced, teaching a plurality of gods in heaven above and that Christ and Jesus were two separate persons. This theory was taught by many, and thousands were led away into this mythology and were never reclaimed. An account of these heresies will be found in the writings of Irenæus. He wrote his notable work between A. D. 182 and 189.

Through the faith of the gospel people received full salvation from sin and found grace to live free from sin. They entered the holiest and were made perfect through sanctification. Through faith in the name of Jesus the sick were healed of all their diseases, the lame were made to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak; devils were cast out; and great power and grace rested upon the entire church.

The reader can readily judge what the result was when men fell away from that faith; they lost all the foregoing blessings from God. So it can easily be seen how such a departure and falling away brought darkness and superstition and all conceivable doctrines of devils into the world. The ordinances were corrupted soon after the apostles' death. Feet-washing was lowered from a church ordinance to a practise in the home, to a mere act of hospitality. Baptism also was corrupted. In case of sickness, sprinkling and rubbing were substituted for immersion. Oil was sometimes used instead of water. At times the candidates were divested of all clothing. About Tertullian's time triune immersion took the place of single immersion.

The faith of the gospel teaches that there is one fold, one body—the body of Christ, which is the church; that salvation constitutes us living members of the same; that these members have one mind, one doctrine, are all of one heart and of one soul: but when men fell away from that blessed state of unity, it became necessary for them to be identified with some other body, to enter some other fold and adhere to contrary doctrines. Thus it was that an apostate church was organized in the earth.

We have already seen the humble equality of the apostolic ministry. As the saints began to fall away and drift from the primitive faith, they lost sight of this humble equality and exalted man, as seen in Second Thessalonians. Paul said that the mystery of iniquity was already working. The spirit of it was then seen in some. In John's time it was in public manifestation. In the third epistle of John it is evident that three elders of the church are spoken of; namely, Gaius, Demetrius, and Diotrephes. The first two he commended. They were straight, humble men. But Diotrephes loved to have the preeminence among them. He no doubt wanted to be a bishop, to be higher than

the common presbytery. He did not want to receive the apostle John (verse 9). He knew that John was against any such exaltation. But John comforted Gaius by saying, "When I come, I will remember his deeds." Verse 10. Here is the first mention in Scripture of one man seeking preeminence above the other elders in the local assembly, seeking a position over the others. This was A. D. 90. Just as soon, however, as we pass beyond the sacred writings, in the second century, we find a man exalted to a higher office—a bishop over the common presbyters or elders. This was apostasy already at work.

I will here quote from the Church Fathers to show that in their early day, one man had been already exalted above the rest. Instead of elders and deacons, as the New Testament reads, it was one bishop, elders, and deacons; three classes of officers instead of two; one over the rest.

"Wherefore it is fitting that ye should run together in accordance with the will of your bishop, which thing also ye do. For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop as the strings are to

the harp."—Ignatius to the Ephesians, Chap. IV. "Since, then, I have had the privilege of seeing you, through Damas your most worthy bishop, and through your worthy presbyters Bassus and Apollonius, and through my fellow servant the deacon Sotio."—Ignatius to the Magnesians, Chap. II. "There is but one altar for the whole church, and one bishop with the presbytery and deacons." — Ignatius to the Philadelphians, Chap. IV. "Give heed to the bishop, and to the presbytery, and deacons." —Chap. VII. "The bishop, and the presbyters, and the deacons."—Ignatius to Polycarp, Chap. VI.

The above quotations from Ignatius, who wrote in the first part of the second century, show that at that early date the humble equality of the apostolic order was already inverted and a third office created, by exalting in each local congregation one man as bishop over the common elders, or presbyters. How differently the above quotations read from the sacred Scriptures! At Philippi, Paul addressed the bishops and deacons, but Ignatius taught that at the time of his writing there was "*one bishop,* with the presbyters and deacons." When Paul sent

to Ephesus and called together the local preachers, he called the "elders of the church"; but when Ignatius wrote, he would have had to call the bishop and the elders. When Paul left Titus in Crete, he was to ordain elders in every city; but when Ignatius wrote, he would have had to ordain "a bishop and elders." Ah, beloved reader, this is the " mystery of iniquity." It was the first big step toward the man of sin. As soon as this third office was created and in each assembly one bishop set up over the elders and the deacons, the next step was to confer great honors upon him; to exalt him high above all others. Ignatius, in the latter part of his ministry, was drunk on this spirit.

I will again quote: "As therefore the Lord does nothing without the Father, . . . so do ye, neither presbyter, nor deacon, nor layman, do anything without the bishop."—Ignatius to the Magnesians, Chap VII. "In like manner, let all reverence the deacons as an appointment of Jesus Christ, and the bishop as Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the Father, and the presbyters as the sanhedrin of God, and assembly of the apostles. Apart from these there is no church." —Ignatius to the Trallians, Chap. III. "And do

ye also reverence your bishop as Christ himself. . . . For what is the bishop but one who beyond all others possesses all power and authority, so far as it is possible for man to possess it, who according to his ability has been made an imitator of the Christ of God? And what is the presbytery but a sacred assembly, the counselors and assessors of the bishop?"—Chap. VII.

"Reverence your bishop as Jesus Christ" and "do nothing without the bishop"—that is getting him pretty high. But such was the spirit then at work. In the early church, the presbytery was an assembly of ministers. If a number of local preachers assembled, they constituted a presbytery; or a gathering of both traveling and local elders, as at Jerusalem (Acts 15), was properly termed a presbytery: but when Ignatius wrote, they were common elders who served as counselors and assessors of the bishop. Oh, how changed! Humble equality was lost sight of.

"Let governors be obedient to Cæsar; soldiers, to those that command them; deacons, to the presbyters, as to high priests; the presbyters, and deacons, and the rest of the clergy, together with all the people, and the soldiers,

and the governors, and Cæsar himself, to the bishop."—Ignatius to the Philadelphians, Chap. IV. If this was not making great strides toward popery, I can not understand language. The bishop was exalted above all "the clergy," even above Cæsar himself, and this in the second century. Such was the teaching of Ignatius. Surely the great apostasy came early. The people of God's holiness possessed it but "a little while." Of course the bishop had not, in reality, yet reached such a high place, but the people were working hard to get him there, and Ignatius' writings show that he believed such was his place.

Again we quote: "See that ye follow the bishop, even as Jesus does the Father, and the presbytery as ye would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist which is administered either by the bishop or by one to whom he has entrusted it. Wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude of the people also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic church. It is not lawful without the

bishop either to baptize or to celebrate a love-feast, but whatever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing to God."—Ignatius to the Smyrnæans, Chap. VIII. "He who honors the bishop has been honored by God; he who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop, does in reality serve the devil." "Nor is there any one in the church greater than the bishop." "He who honors the bishop shall be honored by God." "Let the laity be subject to the deacons; the deacons to the presbyters; the presbyters to the bishops."—Chap. IX. "If he reckon himself greater than the bishop, he is ruined. But it becomes both men and women who marry, to form their union with the approval of the bishop."—Ignatius to Polycarp, Chap. V.

Thus we have given a few quotations from the early writings to show how soon the humble equality of the apostolic government was overthrown and man exalted. This kept working more and more. The bishop was lifted up higher and higher, until about the third century; then a higher office was created. After that date we have a class of officers called archbishops—bishops over other bishops. Some-

times one bishop would rule over the bishops of a score of churches. This was forming the man of sin. In the church of God there is but one chief shepherd, one chief bishop—Christ—but at this date there was an exalting of man to this lofty position. This kept on working and fomenting, man being exalted higher and higher until finally the pope was elected head of the church—so-called. Instead of Christ's working all in all, in all the members, man-power ruled the church.

2 Thess. 2:3 is rendered in the Emphatic Diaglott as follows: "Let no one delude you by any means, because *the apostasy* must come first, and there must be revealed that man of sin, that son of destruction." "Falling away" is from *apostasia*. Another form of this word—the neuter gender, *apostasion*—is found in Matt. 19:7; Mark 10:4; and Matt. 5:31. Here it is translated "divorcement." This form of the word—*apostasion*—signifies the bill of divorcement, the giving of writing, which effects complete separation. But *apostasia*, the word in 2 Thess. 2:3, is a feminine use of the word, and signifies the real separation or departure rather than the giving of a bill. Therefore 2 Thess.

2:3, properly rendered, would read, "The departure or separation must first come."

The apostate condition of the church is, in Scripture, viewed from different standpoints in order to bring out its different phases. That part of the divine ecclesia which departed from the Lord, fell away from the plain of eternal truth, was separated from him. This thought I will take up briefly. The church of God is represented in Scripture as a bride. The blessed union between the Lord and his people is expressed by the term "marriage." In Isa. 62: 1-5 the prophet speaks of the new-testament church under the metaphors of "Zion" and "Jerusalem," and says that is she to be termed Beulah—married. "Thy land shall be married." It was seen that "as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride," so God would rejoice over his people—a clear prediction of the new-testament church. The Gentiles were to help compose this bride, and, as a result of this new happy union, she was to be called by a "new name." How clear! As soon as the marriage takes place, the maiden drops her name and is called by a new name, the name of her husband. So with the church. After this blessed

union, whatever we do in word, thought, or deed, we do "all in the name of the Lord" (1 Cor. 3:17). The wife, in order to honor her husband, must bear his name. To take upon her another man's name is to dishonor her husband and to make herself an adulteress. Just so with the church. In order to honor her husband, she must bear his name; to take upon her another name is to make herself a spiritual adulteress.

Millennialists generally contend that a state of marriage does not now exist. If that is true, then we are bastards and not legitimate children. Thus it has been discovered by these preachers that the apostle John was mistaken when he said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." The reader will remember that in a former chapter I have treated the different figures of marriage used in the Bible, and that in one of them God is now a husband and father to his people. It will be remembered that the church was seen in Rev. 12:1 as a woman clothed with the sun, and having upon her head a crown adorned with twelve stars. How beautifully was that bride robed in holiness, in the garments of salvation. She sat a queen. A crown upon her head denoted her royalty. Her

husband was the King of heaven and earth, King of kings, and Lord of lords. He was crowned with glory and honor (Heb. 2:9). But he also crowned her with his glory. "The glory which thou hast given me I have given them." John 17:22. Thus the church sat and reigned a queen. The time came, however, when thousands upon thousands among the Christians departed from the Lord.

The church at Rome was once a congregation of saints. Paul was one of the leading ministers who were instrumental in establishing and planting that assembly. After the death of Paul, Linus, who is mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:21, became hishop, or overseer, of that assembly. But in after-years when they began to exalt bishops over the elders, and finally one bishop over another bishop, the bishop of Rome, being located in the imperial city, thought he ought to have authority over the other bishops. Erelong the bishops of the Western churches submitted to that order, and thus the papacy was established. You see, these assemblies were originally pure churches of God, but they departed from the simple government of Christ and the apostles, and thus became apostate.

Viewing the condition of affairs during the Dark Ages from this standpoint, we behold the church at Rome an apostate church. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Isa. 1:21: "How is the faithful city become an harlot? It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it, but now murders." The very congregations that were once pure churches of God departed, fell away from, the faith of the gospel, and out of them grew the apostate church—the church of Rome. The prophets, viewing this particular phase of the apostasy, saw the church turning degenerate. The faithful city, once full of righteousness, represents the primitive church, in the morning glory of this dispensation. She became a harlot by departing from the Lord; that is, that part of the church which apostatized became a harlot, forsook Christ, and thus the pope became her husband. She played the harlot and committed fornication. This was the great separation expressed by apostasy. She departed from Christ her living head, and that apostate woman he never acknowledged as his wife.

"For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst I will not

transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" Jer. 2:20, 21. While this had its partial fulfilment in Israel's departing from God, yet it has an application to the church of God, for one is a type of the other. "I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed." Such was the pure church of God planted by Christ, her divine founder and head; but by falling away she departed from him, played the harlot, became degenerate, a strange vine. "Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me." Jer. 3:20. "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers." Jer. 3:1. "Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, neither am I thy husband: let her, therefore, put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; . . . For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink."

Hos. 2:2, 5. While these scriptures were fulfilled in Judah's and Israel's apostasy, and had direct reference to that time, they indirectly reached a fulfilment in the apostasy of the church, for Israel was a type of the church. Israel was planted "a noble vine"; but she treacherously departed from the Lord, went into open idolatry, committed adultery with stones and stocks. She played the harlot with many lovers, and the land was greatly polluted. For this cause the Lord put her away and gave her a bill of divorcement. "Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away." Isa. 50:1.

In the legal dispensation, when a man put away his wife, he gave her a bill of divorcement. So the Lord uses this language to express the condition of Israel when she forsook him. He no longer recognized her as his wife, or people. This is expressed by divorcement. In this dispensation, however, divorcing is not recognized. The divorce law was abolished.

Nevertheless, for one certain cause—fornication or adultery—a man may put away his wife—separate. Now, just as Israel departed from God, the faithful city, Zion, "departed from her husband and became a harlot." She committed fornication, became "a great whore." The Lord could not acknowledge her in this condition as his wife; this is expressed by *apostasia* —separation. Thus we learn what Paul meant when he said the falling away—departure, *apostasia,* separation — shall first come before the end. It came, and Israel's apostasy was a type of it.

The apostate church is brought to view in Revelation 17 under the symbol of a corrupt woman having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications. She is called "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots." This corrupt woman is not the bride of Christ. There is no communication with the living head. She apostatized—separated from the truth, played the harlot—and at last she will have her portion in the lake of fire and brimstone. This is the great apostasy.

The Reign of Popery.

We will again return to 2 Thessalonians 2. Simultaneously with the falling away—apostasy—"that man of sin," "the son of perdition," would be revealed; "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Verses 3, 4. This man of sin refers to the church of Rome, and especially to her bishop, or pope. In these every specification of the prophecy is fulfilled. The pope was exalted to be the head of the so-called church. In the previous chapters we have traced the church from the time of the humble equality of her ministers, as seen in the days of the apostles, to the time when this order was changed and a third office was created—a bishop raised over the common elders, or overseers—and then to the time when archbishops were appointed over other bishops. This exalting of man kept right on, lifting the archbishop higher and higher, until the whole thing ripened into popery.

This exaltation was the work of darkness,

and the pope himself, "the son of perdition." He "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped." This certainly was fulfilled in popery. The pope, it is said, claimed power to remit the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost—something that neither Christ nor the Father claimed to do. The pope was exalted above every object of adoration; God and Christ were secondary. The pope became the source whence emanated every institution relative to divine worship, all the doctrines of religion, and all rites and ceremonies. He held the highest authority and place in the church, setting himself up as the universal head of the church. He acted as God, taking upon himself God's titles and attributes, and arrogating to himself the authority that belongs to the Most High. The pope claimed infallibility; power to damn and to save. Such titles were conferred upon him as "Vicegerent of the Son of God," "Most Holy Pope," etc. 2 Thess. 2:9, 10 describes this awful reign of deception and darkness, which continued over one thousand years.

Popery was foretold in the prophecy of Daniel. "Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the

heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of

man, and a mouth speaking great things." Dan. 7: 2-8.

This vision troubled Daniel, so he asked an angel its meaning. The reply was, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." Verse 17. These were the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman kingdoms. The first—the one like a lion—represented Babylon. At first the lion had eagle's wings, denoting the rapidity with which Babylon extended its conquests under Nebuchadnezzar. After a time the wings were plucked, and a man's heart was given to it. It no longer flew like an eagle upon its prey. The boldness and spirit of the lion was gone; a man's heart, weak, timorous, and faint, had taken its place. This was the case during the closing years of its history, when it became enfeebled and effeminate through wealth and luxury.

The second beast—the one like a bear—represented the Medo-Persian kingdom—a kingdom composed of two nationalities. The beast raised itself on one side. This was fulfilled in the Persian division, which came up last and attained the higher eminence, for it

became the controlling power in the kingdom. The three ribs in its mouth may signify the three provinces Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, which were especially ground down and oppressed by this power. By the overthrow of these provinces, a stimulus was given the Medes and Persians to undertake further conquests. Thus they said, "Arise, devour much flesh."

The third beast—the one like a leopard—signified the Grecian empire. The four wings upon its back, like the two wings of the first beast, denote rapidity of conquest. The conquests of Grecia under Alexander have no parallel in historic annals for suddenness and rapidity. The four heads of this beast represent the four divisions into which Grecia was split. The Grecian empire maintained its unity little longer than the life of Alexander. Within fifteen years after his brilliant career ended, the kingdom was divided among his four leading generals.

Concerning the fourth kingdom, Daniel wanted a more explicit explanation. "Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of

brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows." Dan. 7:19, 20. "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of the kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings." Dan. 7:23, 24.

This was Rome. She was the fourth universal kingdom which reigned over the world. She devoured, broke in pieces, and crushed the nations with her iron rule. The ten horns are ten kings. These were the ten divided kingdoms which grew out of the Roman empire. Next came up a "little horn." This was popery. Popery grew out of heathen Rome. Three of the ten were plucked up by this one. These were Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Lombards.

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25. All this was fulfilled under the reign of popery. Speaking words against the Most High was fulfilled in the great assumptions of the pope. Wearing out the saints was fulfilled in the long period of martyrdom, when millions were slaughtered because they would not accept the doctrines of the papacy. Changing times and laws had a fulfilment when the papists discarded the LXX, the old apostolic Bible, and substituted in its stead the Hebrew version. The original Septuagint Bible makes the world almost two thousand years older than does the modern version.

This horn—power—grew out of paganism. Though clothed in a Christian garb, it was the same persecuting power. Where heathen Rome slaughtered her thousands, Christian (?) Rome slaughtered her millions. The reign of this power is limited to "a time and times and the dividing of time." This is the exact time the woman was to continue in the wilderness (Rev.

12:14). These must be the same. This time-prophecy will be considered in a later chapter.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17. The dragon, being conquered, cast down, and bound by Christianity, was wroth at the woman, or church. Hence he made war with the remnant of her seed. But this he could not do himself, for his power was broken. He accomplished his purpose, however, through his son "the beast." A son was born unto this dragon, and he was called "the beast." Through this beast, war was made against the remnant of the seed of the woman—the few who stood true to God during the Dark Ages.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Rev. 13:1, 2. It

will be seen that the beast resembles his parent, the dragon. The dragon had seven heads (12:3), so had the beast. The dragon had ten horns, so had the beast. But there was a difference. The dragon had his crowns upon his heads, while the beast had his crowns upon his horns. This beast is popery. Popery is a child of pagan Rome, the dragon. During the reign of the empire the seven heads, or forms of government, were the ruling powers; hence the crowns were upon his heads: but when popery arose, the ten kingdoms were the ruling power—the crowns were upon his horns.

This beast is identical with that of Rev. 17: 3 and the little horn of Daniel 7. This beast was "like a leopard." A leopard is a spotted animal, a type of sin. This shows that this power was very sinful, and such was popery. His feet were as the feet of a bear. This signifies its crushing power. Its mouth as the mouth of a lion, signifies the devouring nature of the papacy. But where did popery get her power? "And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The ten kingdoms of Rome gave "their power and strength unto the beast" (Rev. 17:13). In-

stead of popery receiving her power from above, she received it from paganism. The seat of pagan government—Rome—became the seat of papal rule.

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Verse 3. The solution of this will be given in our exegesis of Rev. 17:10, 11. The Roman empire had seven heads, or forms of government. The sixth of these was the imperial. This was the form of government under the heathen Cæsars. The time came when the hordes of savages from the North swept over the empire and overthrew the imperial government (A. D. 425). It was wounded to death. This lasted about fifty-one years, during which time the patriciate ruled the empire. After this the imperial power revived in the form of popery. The wound was healed. Imperial Rome was the same under priestcraft and popery that it was under the Cæsars. Under the Cæsars it was clothed in heathen garb; under priestcraft, in Christian garb. Thus the beast (popery) constituted the eighth head of Rome and yet was

one of the seven. All the world wondered after the beast. Popery swayed universal dominion.

"And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Verse 4. This was fulfilled by the continuance of the pagan worship in the papal age. The high priest of the Roman pagans was called their pontiff. It was customary among the pagan Romans to deify their great men after their death and to make images to them and worship them. So also was it customary among the papists to make saints of their great men after their death by canonizing them, and their saints are the same to them as the gods of the pagans were to them. Papists pray to their saints, make images to them, and bow to them as the pagans did to their gods. Papists sprinkle their holy water as the pagans sprinkled their holy water. Papists advocate celibacy as did the pagans. In many other ways Roman Catholics have practised the heathen worship. Thus they have caused the people to worship the dragon.

"And there was given unto him a mouth

speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." Verses 5, 6. This was fulfilled in popery by the blasphemous claims of the pope, who claims various prerogatives of God. These we have already considered.

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13: 7, 8. This was fulfilled in the great persecutions of the Christians under the reign of popery. Papal Rome glutted herself on the blood that heathen Rome only tasted. It is hardly necessary to refer to the bloody reign of the Dark Ages, for nearly all are well acquainted with the facts. I would simply refer the reader to such histories as Fox's Book of Martyrs, Christian Heroes and Martyrs, Martyr's Mirror, etc. All people worshiped popery except those whose names were

in the book of life. These latter were the ones who suffered martyrdom at her cruel hands.

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." Rev. 11:1-4. This temple, as clearly seen in previous chapters, is the church of God. Those who worship in this temple are God's people. The altar is Christ (Heb. 13:10). The measuring-reed is the Word of God. The holy city also signifies the church. Almost the same language is found in Luke 21:24, where the literal city of Jerusalem is meant. It is said that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Here in Rev. 11:2 it is said, "And the holy city shall they [the Gentiles]

tread under foot forty and two months." The former was to have a literal fulfilment; the latter, a spiritual fulfilment.

Jerusalem was a type of the church. Its desolating and treading down by the Gentile nations was, and is, a clear type of the great apostasy, which has defiled and trodden under foot the spiritual Jerusalem, the sanctuary of God. The time-limit of this downtrodden condition of the church is "forty and two months." This is the same period already considered in the many time-prophecies that measure the reign of popery. During this same period God says that his two witnesses shall prophesy, clothed in sackcloth. In verse 4 these are called the two candlesticks and two olive-trees, standing before the God of the earth. This gives us the key to the prophecy. Zechariah speaks of these in the following words:

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked and behold a candlestick all of gold with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the

top thereof: and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive-branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Zech. 4:1-6, 11-14.

Zechariah was one of the prophets who prophesied unto Zerubbabel and the Jews at Jerusalem to build the house of God. These two olive-trees, he informs us, "are the two

anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth"; and they are interpreted by the angel to be *the Word of the Lord,* by the *Spirit* of the Lord, unto Zerubbabel (verse 6). From this we clearly see that these two witnesses, two anointed ones, two olive-trees, signify the *Word* and the *Spirit* of God. The Word of God and the Spirit of God are the special witnesses of the Lord here on the earth. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a *witness* unto all nations." Matt. 24:14. "Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which *testify* of me." John 6:39. "The Holy Ghost also is a *witness.*" Heb. 10:15. See also Rom. 8:16; 1 John 5:6. These are the two prophets that have been given unto the church as the vicars of Christ in the world, and through them God has governed the church in all ages. They governed victoriously before A. D. 270, which is properly termed the morning-light age.

"Then came up the beast, with a man at the head of it claiming to be the vicar of Christ. A contest between the true vicars, the Word and the Spirit, and the false vicar, the pope, followed, which continued 1,260 days. These 1,260 days signify the same 1,260 years of the papal

age which lie between 270 and 1530. In this age the Word and Spirit of God never surrendered their vicarship, but there were always found true witnesses of Christ, who were determined to be governed by the Word and Spirit of God, like the saints in the morning light. These the pope was constantly causing to be put to death. This is doubtless what is signified by the sackcloth with which these two prophets were dressed during that age, sackcloth being an emblem of melancholy, distress, and mourning."

Turning back to Rev. 13:10 we read: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." Ah! the patience and faith of the saints during that long, bloody night of papal darkness, was that the very beast-power which was leading them into captivity and killing them with the sword would sometime itself go into captivity and suffer death from the sword. Thank God, their prayers were answered and their hopes realized. In the sixteenth century, God began to raise up reformers, such as Huss, Melanchthon, and Luther, who hurled the awful thunderbolts of heaven

against the beast-power of popery. Truth, so long crushed, began to arise and triumph in the earth. The Reformation spread rapidly in every direction. Watch-fires were kindled throughout all Germany and almost all Europe. Thousands threw off the galling yoke of popery and came out into clearer light. God's kingdom, which was to conquer every opposing power, conquered popery.

The Reformation spread so rapidly and its power became so great that it cast its influence upon the rulers of nations, who turned Protestant. The very rulers and kings that had so long upheld the Catholic sect now turned against her and gave their support to Protestantism. The sword was turned against the beast. There were thirty years of bloody war in Germany. Finally the papal power was broken and the beast sheared of its temporal power. That beast which had ruled the earth for 1,260 long years was left bleeding and wounded, and it has been growing weaker ever since. Thus the prayers of those millions who were slain during its long reign were answered; and the words of God in Rev. 17:16 were fulfilled, where he says that the very kings and

rulers who supported the great harlot "shall hate her, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

After this John was carried away in the spirit "into the wilderness" (Rev. 17:3).

What did John now see?

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken

with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." Rev. 17: 1-6.

Oh, how changed! What a contrast! Now he beholds "a great whore." Instead of a pure woman, that chaste virgin, he now beholds a woman "with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." She holds a cup full of the "filthiness of her fornication." This woman is "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." No wonder John "wondered with great admiration." Before the apostasy she stood upon the moon—the Word of God (12:1); now she sits "upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Ah, beloved reader, this woman represents the apostate church. She is the Catholic church. The beast that carried her is imperial Rome under the popes and bishops. This is made clear by the angel's interpretation of this marvelous vision.

"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of

the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but received power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the

whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Verse 7-18.

Here is a full explanation of the mystery. "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." This no doubt refers to the city of Rome, built upon seven hills or mountains. Rome was the seat of both the pagan and the papal government. Hence, on her, sat this woman and ruled or reigned over the kings of the earth. Thus she sat on seven mountains. But the seven heads have another signification. "And there are seven kings." These refer to the seven supreme forms of government which the Roman empire had: (1) the regal, (2) the dictatorial, (3) the decemviral, (4) the consular, (5) the triumviral, (6) the imperial, (7) and the patrician.

These were the ruling powers of the empire. The angel thus informed John: "Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space." That is, at the time John received this vision, the first five had already fallen. "One is." The form of government ruling the empire in John's time was the *imperial.* The rulers were the heathen Cæsars. It was the sixth head of Rome. The other "not yet come" was the patrician, which had not yet developed at John's time. It was to continue "but a short space." Adam Clark says that the time during which the patriciate ruled the empire was limited to forty-five years. Some authorities say fifty-one years; others, twenty-six. This was a short period compared with the duration of several of the preceding forms of government. This makes the seven heads of the empire.

Next the angel interprets the beast upon which the woman sat: "And the beast that thou sawest was, and is not; . . . behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." This beast upon which the woman sat is the eighth

head of Rome, and yet was one of the seven. This beast was popery. Popery was the eighth and last head of Rome. It is the same secular beast as seen in Rev. 13: 1-11. "But," says one, "how was it one of the original seven?" Let us see. The sixth head of the empire was the *imperial* under the heathen Cæsars. This imperial power was the persecuting power of Rome against the early Christians. Imperial Rome ruled the world. Thus "it was." But the time came when the hordes of savages from the North swept the empire and wounded the imperial head to death. The imperial government was overthrown. It remained about fifty-one years, during which the patriciate ruled the empire. Thus "it was not." But a little later this same imperial power revived under a Christian garb. The same power that ruled under the Cæsars in heathen garb, though wounded to death for about fifty-one years, revived and ruled under the priests and popes in Christian garb. Thus this beast "was, and is not, and yet is," and now constitutes the eighth head of Rome. The identical power that ruled under Cæsar ruled under popery—imperial Rome—first in heathen garb, next in Christian garb; but it was

the same persecuting power in Christian garb that it had been in heathen garb.

As early as A. D. 270 the devil manufactured an apostate church. This apostate institution is what the woman, the great whore, represented. When the old persecuting *imperial* power revived, it entered this apostate institution and gave it its life under the popes and priests. It became the power that ruled this apostate church. Thus the woman sat upon this scarlet-colored beast. This beast was imperial Rome under popes and priests, hence *popery*. This makes clear how the horns of imperial Rome, under pagan rule, served as the horns of papal Rome. It was the same power clothed in a different garb. These ten horns, as already seen in this chapter, signify the ten divided kingdoms of Rome. These were to "give their power and strength unto the beast." Thus they became his horns, just as they had served as the horns of the dragon. The time was to come when these kings would 'hate the whore, and should make her desolate and naked, and should eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.' This no doubt was fulfilled when the very nations that had once supported popery and constituted her horns

turned against her and sheared her of all temporal power. Among others, England and Germany effected this, and became the horns, or powers, which supported Protestantism.

This beast ascended "out of the bottomless pit," was of hellish origin. Such is the whole system of popery. It emanated from hell, and "shall go into perdition." This very beast will finally be "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20).

"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Rev. 17:18. This is Babylon the Great—the Roman Catholic sect. She is the great whore. She is guilty of "the blood of the saints, and the martyrs of Jesus." History states that she glutted herself with the blood of nearly fifty million saints. The bride of Christ was clothed with the sun; she wore the robes of righteousness. But this woman "was arrayed in purple and scarlet color." This apostate woman Christ never acknowledged as his bride.

Daniel foretold the downfall of popery in the following words: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to con-

sume and to destroy it unto the end." Dan. 7:26. This judgment began in the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, and today is being executed with divine authority. The result is that the beast-power is diminishing, and it will continue so "till the end."

The Dark Ages—Night.

Compared with the clear morning glory of the church, this awful period is well expressed by night. The clear light that shone so brilliantly in the apostolic age was eclipsed by the darkest superstition and errors that men and devils have ever invented. The earth was flooded with false doctrines of every kind. Image-worship, prayers offered to the Virgin Mary, licentious popes regarded as infallible, prayers offered for the dead, the Bible chained to the pulpit, martyred saints branded as heretics, and a thousand other things of like character were rife during that time.

"What are termed the Middle Ages commenced with the fifth and terminated with the fifteenth century. Of these the first six are denominated the Dark Ages. But throughout the whole period Christianity suffered a long eclipse of a thousand years."—Goodrich's Church History, page 478. This period was thus foretold in prophecy: "Watchman, what of the night?" The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night." Isa. 21:11, 12. As before observed, the morning here referred to was the

ushering in of the Christian era, the clear, transplendent light of the gospel and the church of God in the beginning of this age. But it was foreseen that night would follow the morning. "The morning cometh and also the night." In the natural day night does not follow the dawn of morning; but in the day here referred to—the gospel day—night was to come immediately after the morning. And true to prophecy, "the people of God's holiness, possessed it but a little while." The morning glory of the church was early eclipsed by the great apostasy, and there followed a long dark night of more than one thousand years.

The Length of the Papal Reign Measured by Inspiration.

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25. The power here referred to was the papacy. The saints were to be given into his hand; that is, that power was to rule over them for "a time and times and the dividing of time." In Dan. 12:7 the same period is allotted to this beast-power, which was to scatter the power of the holy people "a time, times, and a half." What does a "time" signify? By turning to the fourth chapter of Daniel we find an answer. Here is given an account of King Nebuchadnezzar's being driven from men and living with the beasts of earth. The period of his humiliation is called seven times, in verses 23 and 32. That was seven years. So a time signifies a year. Times would be two years. It can not be less, and if more, the numerals would be given, as three times, four times, etc. The dividing of time, or a half time, would be one-half of a year.

So time, times, and a half equal three and one-half years. This equals 42 months, or if reduced to days, counting 30 days to the month, according to the Jewish reckoning, 1,260 days.

In Rev. 12:14 we see the woman—church—fleeing from the dragon into a wilderness, "where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time." This wilderness signifies the obscurity into which the true church went, and in which she remained during the dark reign of the papacy. Thus during the reign of popery the woman—church of God—existed in the place prepared of God. She was nourished and kept alive for a time, times, and half a time; but during this period she was largely in obscurity, symbolized by a wilderness. Here again we have the papel reign or supremacy over God's people measured by inspiration. The wilderness state of the church is the same period as that in Daniel's prophecy—three and one-half times—years. This reduced to months equals 42 months, or 1,260 days. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Rev. 12:6. Here again we have the same period—

1,260 days—of the beast—popery. It was said he should continue "forty and two months" (Rev. 13:5). This reduced to days gives us 1,260. "And the holy city [church] shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Rev. 11:2), or 1,260 days. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." Rev. 11:3. Here are other texts giving the same period, or measurement—1,260 days. This can not refer to natural days, for then the period would cover only three and one-half years. The language of prophecy in Revelation is largely symbolic. These, then, must be symbolic days, each day for a year.

Under the law there was a week of seven days and a week of seven years. This was common among the Jews. In Num. 14:34 this thought is presented. "After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years." Again, in Ezek. 4:6: "And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Ju-

dah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year." Applying this rule, the 1,260 days in which the church was to remain in the wilderness state equals so many years.

A careful consideration of all the foregoing time-prophecies reveals the fact that the mere reign of the papacy from the time of its establishment to its overthrow is not the central thought, but how long that power would hold down God's people and keep the Word and Spirit of God in sackcloth. How long the church was to continue in a state of apostasy—that is the thought. The 1,260 years were to measure the time from which the church went into real darkness until she came out in the clear light. Some have supposed that this period must have dated from the time when popery became fully established. Such, however, could not be the case, although the time-period includes that event; for the power of apostasy was greatly developed centuries before the final supremacy of the pope was established, and it was necessary to prepare a way for their exaltation. Popes obtained their authority by degrees. In A.D. 606 the Emperor Phocas conferred the title Universal Bishop upon the pope of Rome. In

A. D. 756 the pope became a temporal sovereign, but the power of papal usurpation did not reach the summit until the reign of Hildebrand, who succeeded the pope in A. D. 1073 under the title of Gregory the Seventh.

I will give a number of quotations from history which clearly locate the time in which the church really went into apostasy. Some of these are extracts from "The Revelation Explained," by F. G. Smith. "The living church retired gradually within the lonely sanctuary of a few solitary hearts. An external church was substituted in its place, and all its forms were declared to be of divine appointment. Salvation no longer flowing from the Word, which was henceforward put out of sight, the priests affirmed that it was conveyed by means of the forms they themselves invented, that no one could obtain it but by these channels. The doctrine of the church and the necessity of its visible unity which had begun to gain ground in the third century favored the pretensions of Rome."—D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, book I, chap. I.

"At the end of the third century almost half of the inhabitants of the Roman empire and of

several neighboring countries professed the faith of Christ. About this time endeavors to preserve a unity of belief and of church discipline occasioned numberless disputes among those of different opinions and led to the establishment of an ecclesiastical tyranny."—Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge. Concerning the Roman diocese the Encyclopedia Brittanica gives the following:

"Before the termination of the third century the office was held to be of such importance that its succession was a matter of interest to ecclesiastics living in different sees."—Vol. XIX, page 488.

"Almost proportionate with the extension of Christianity was the decrease in the church of vital piety. A philosophising spirit among the higher and a wild monkish superstition among the lower orders fast took the place in the third century of the faith and humility of the first Christians. Many of the clergy became very corrupt and excessively ambitious. In consequence of this there was an awful defection of Christianity."—Marsh's Church History, page 185.

"We have found it almost necessary to sepa-

rate, and indeed widely to distinguish, the events of the two first from those of the third century, for nearly at this point we are disposed to place the first crisis in the internal history of the church."—Waddington's Church History.

"This season of external prosperity was improved by the ministers of the church for the exertion of new claims, and the assumption of powers with which they had not been previously invested. At first these claims were modestly urged, and gradually allowed; but they laid a foundation for the encroachments which were afterwards made upon the rights of the whole Christian community, and for lofty pretensions to the right of supremacy and spiritual dominion. . . . Several alterations in the form of church government appear to have been introduced during the third century. Some degree of pomp was thought necessary. . . . An external dignity of the ministers of religion was accompanied by a still greater change in its discipline. . . . Many of the Jewish and pagan proselytes . . . languished in the absence of ceremonies which were naturally adapted to the taste of the unreflecting multitude, while the insolent infidel haughtily insisted upon the inanity of a religion

which was not manifested by an external symbol or decoration. In order to accommodate Christianity to these prejudices, a number of rites were instituted; and while the dignified titles of the Jewish priesthood were, through a compliance with the prejudices of that people conferred upon the Christian teachers, many ceremonies were introduced which coincided with the genius of paganism. The true Gospels were taught by sensible images, and many of the ceremonies employed in celebrating the heathen mysteries were observed in the institutions of Christ, which soon, in their turn, obtained the name of mysteries and served as a melancholy precedent for future innovations and as a foundation for that structure of absurdity and superstition which deformed and disgraced the church."—Rutter's History of the Church, pages 52-56.

This "season of external prosperity" mentioned by Rutter began with the accession of Gallienus to the imperial throne in A. D. 260. Up to this time the hand of persecution had been raised against the church almost incessantly, and from 260 until the reign of Diocletian persecution ceased, during this space of al-

most forty years. But this period also marked the greatest decline in spiritual things and marvelous development of the hierarchy. Speaking of the bishop of Rome in these times, Dowling says: "He far surpassed all his brethren in the magnificence and splendor of the church over which he presided, in the riches of his revenues and possessions, in the number and variety of his ministers, in his credit with the people, and in his sumptuous and splendid manner of living."—History of Romanism, page 34.

Speaking of the period now under consideration, Eusebius, "father of church history," "mentions one Paul, who was at this time bishop of Antioch, who lived in luxury and licentiousness, and who was a teacher of erroneous doctrines, and usurped such great authority that the people feared to venture to accuse him. In the conclusion of the same chapter in which this is found, he shows that after a general council was held at Antioch, this Paul was excommunicated and robbed of his bishopric by the bishops of Rome and Italy. From this it appears that they possessed a power and authority still greater than that usurped by Paul." The following are his words: "Paul, therefore, having

thus fallen from the episcopate, together with the true faith as already said, Domnus succeeded in administration of the church at Antioch. But Paul being unwilling to leave the building of the church, an appeal was made to the emperor Aurelian, who decided most equitably on the business, ordering the building to be given up to those whom the Christian bishops of Italy and Rome should write."—Ecclesiastical History, book VII, chap. 30. The Encyclopedia Brittanica says that this council at which Paul was excommunicated was held "probably in the year 268," and that "Paul continued in his office until the year 272, when the city was taken by the emperor Aurelian, who decided in person that the church building belonged to the bishop who was in epistolary communication with the bishops of Rome and Italy."—Vol. XVIII, page 429.

The above extracts show not only the development of error in the church, but also the great power already obtained by the hierarchy. Geo. Fisher says: "The accession of Constantine [A. D. 312] found the church so firmly organized under the hierarchy that it could not lose its identity by being absolutely merged in the

state."—History of the Christian Church, page 99.

"In the year A. D. 270 Anthony, an Egyptian, and founder of the monastic institution, fixed his abode in the deserts of Egypt and formed monks into organized bodies. Influenced by these eminent examples [Anthony, Hilarion, *et al.*] immense multitudes betook themselves to the deserts, and innumerable monasteries were formed in Egypt, Ethiopia, Lybia, and Syria. Some of the Egyptian abbots are spoken of as having had five, seven, or even ten thousand monks under their personal direction; and Thebias, as well as certain spots in Arabia, are reported to have been literally crowded with solitaries. Nearly a hundred thousand of all classes, it is said, were at one time to be found in Egypt. . . . Although the enthusiasm might be at a lower ebb in one country than in another, it actually affected the church universally, so far as the extant materials of ecclesiastical history enable us to trace its rise and progress. . . . The more rigid and heroic of the Christian anchorets dispensed with all clothing except a rug or a few palm-leaves around the loins. Most of them abstained from the use of water for ab-

lution; nor did they usually wash or change the garments they had put on. Thus St. Anthony [the founder of this order] bequeathed to Athanasius a skin in which his sacred person had been wrapped for half a century. They also allowed their beards and nails to grow, and sometimes became so hirsute as to be actually mistaken for hyenas or bears."—History of Romanism, pp. 88, 89. Reader, what was the condition of the church in A. D. 270, that the introduction of such abominations was possible?

Although many more examples of this might be added, I will conclude with two extracts from Joseph Milner:

"We shall, for the present, leave Anthony propagating the dispensation, and extending its influence not only into the next century, but for many ages afterwards, and conclude this view of the state of the third century, with expressing our regret that the faith and love of the gospel received towards the close of it a dreadful blow from the encroachment of this unchristian practise."—Cen. III, chap. 20.

"Moral, and philosophical, and monastic instructions will not effect for men what is to be

expected from evangelical doctrine. And if the faith of Christ was so much declined (and its decayed state ought to be dated from about the year 270), we need not wonder that such sins as you see Eusebius hints at without any circumstantial details took place in the Christian world."—Cen. IV, chap 1.

I have thus quoted at considerable length to show the reader that the real decline of the church and its rapid drift into the apostasy took place about the middle or during the third century. Taking this century as our starting-point, the 1,260 years would reach into the sixteenth century somewhere; and when we come to consider the statements of history, as Milner puts it, it is not hard to place a definite date—the year 270 A. D. Measuring forward from this date, the 1,260 years brings us to the exact date of the first Protestant creed—the Augsburg Confession in A. D. 1530. To this date we must point both for the end of Rome's universal supremacy and for the rise of Protestantism. True, the work of reformation began before this time, but the adopting and the forming of the Augsburg Confession marks a clear dividing-line between the age of Roman-

ism and the real rise of Protestantism. And this is the date and period at which God's people who had been held captive in the darkness of the papacy came out into clear light. Thus unmistakably inspiration has marked out the exact time that God's people were held fast during the dark night of popery.

The Reformation.

The sixteenth-century work under Martin Luther has been pointed to as the date of the Reformation; but it may be well to observe that prior to Luther's time the Lord raised up certain reformers and that these prepared the way for the work that was consummated under Luther. Among them was John Wyclif, who was born in 1324. He was one of the greatest of the reformers before the Reformation. He was a man of great learning, and by his writings he fearlessly and successfully exposed the wicked and unchristian pretensions of popes, prelates, and Roman officers and the corruption of the Romish church. He was professor of divinity at Oxford, which university he defended against the insolent pretensions of the mendicant friars. He boldly remonstrated with the pope. Wyclif rendered to the church the greatest service that was possible in the order of instrumentality. Besides restoring the true doctrine of justification by faith in the atonement and righteousness of Christ, he translated the whole Bible into English. By the circulation of the Word of God, especially of the New Testament,

a permanent foundation was laid for the future destruction of Romish idolatry and superstition. The principles of this reformer did not perish with the death of their advocate. Though his doctrines were condemned in popish counsel and his books destroyed, his bones dug up and burned to ashes, yet he had kindled a flame that continued to grow brighter and brighter until it became the blazing light of the Sixteenth Century Reformation.

Among the other reformers who preceded the Reformation was John Huss. He was converted by reading the writings of Wyclif. Huss raised his voice in Bohemia a hundred years before Luther offered to speak in Saxony. He seemed to have been able to penetrate deep into the real essence of Christian truth. The flames which rose from his funeral pile kindled a fire that spread through dense darkness a distinct light, the glimmerings of which were not readily extinguished. From his dungeon he sent forth to the world words of pathetic import. He foresaw the needs of the Reformation. Among the prophetic declarations of Huss are the following: "The wicked have begun by preparing a treacherous snare for a goose; but if even

the goose, which is only a domestic bird, a peaceable creature, and whose flight is not very far in the air, has nevertheless broken into their toils, other birds soaring more boldly towards the sky, will break through them with still greater force. Instead of a feeble goose, the truth will send forth eagles and keen-eyed vultures." This was fulfilled in the Reformation a hundred years later. When Huss was brought to the stake and the fagots were piled up around him, he said to those doing it, "You are now going to burn a goose [Huss signifying goose in the Bohemian language], but in a century you will have a swan, whom you can neither roast nor boil." This surely was fulfilled in Martin Luther.

We might mention many other forerunners of the Reformation, but space will not permit. These men who preceded the work of Luther were only preparing the way for a mighty overturning of the powers of the papacy, a work which was effected in the Sixteenth Century Reformation.

Martin Luther was born at Eisleben on Nov. 10, 1483. He was educated in the university at Erfurt. In 1507 he was ordained a priest; in

1509 he became a bachelor of theology and commenced lecturing on the Holy Scriptures. God revealed to this man the glorious truths of justification by faith. The Roman church and religion was made up largely of works, doing penance, etc. But when God revealed to the reformer the truth of justification by faith, he began to herald the same forth with all the powers and energies which God gave him. From the time he nailed the ninety-nine theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany, a new epoch in the church began.

Luther had a faithful colaborer by the name of Melanchthon. Their works spread rapidly over Germany. Thousands upon thousands threw away the galling yokes imposed upon them by the Catholic church and came out into the clear light.

About the same time that Luther was preaching the truth revealed to him, Menno Simons came out and also began to preach salvation from sin. About this time Zwingli began to preach the truth of salvation from sin throughout Switzerland. Thus the Reformation rapidly spread in every direction.

Among the noted reformers who followed

Luther may be named John Calvin. Though he held some doctrines which were not Scriptural, as predestination, yet he effected a great work and led thousands out of darkness. Religious liberty came as a result of the Reformation. The great Babylon of popery was declared by Luther to be fallen, and there is no question but that at his time there was a fulfilling of the Scriptures in the calling of God's people out of her.

Protestantism.

Not only was a great reformation the result of preaching the glorious truth of justification by faith, but those who came out under this teaching began to protest against the superstitions, the false doctrines, and the evil practises of the papacy. This set them in direct opposition against the church of Rome, and thus those who came out under the reformers were called Protestants.

There is no question but that God was in the Reformation and that he raised up such men as Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Menno Simons, and Calvin to lead the people of God out from under the galling yokes imposed upon them by the church of Rome into a blessed Christian liberty and enjoyment of the privileges of the gospel. Though the reformers did not have the clear light as it shone in the days of primitive Christianity, yet the truth that they did preach, coming as it did out of the utter darkness that had covered the earth for more than one thousand years, was like brilliant rays of light from heaven. Thousands upon thousands rejoiced in that light and embraced it.

Thus the church of God emerged from the great wilderness of obscurity in which she had been held fast so long, and songs of deliverance filled the hearts of the redeemed.

This naturally stirred the camp of the Roman church into a state of hatred against the reformers and their followers. Persecution at once began. Soon after the death of Luther there came a great war in Germany between the Protestants and the Catholics. It is known in history as the Thirty Years' War. In the beginning of this great conflict it seemed that the work of the reformers would be crushed, but through the assistance of Gustavus Adolphus, from Sweden, who, with his armies, came to the rescue of the Protestants in Germany, they eventually gained the victory and secured their religious liberty.

It has become customary to denominate all the religious systems that have arisen since the Reformation, Protestants; therefore Protestantism is properly all the so-called Christian churches that discard at least some of the doctrines of their mother, the Roman church.

Sect-making.

The Lutheran reformation was soon followed by apostasy. As before stated, Zwingli at this time was effecting a reformation in Switzerland, and Calvin also was doing a work. Menno Simons came out of popery at this time. Though the reformers preached some truth, yet coming out of the darkness of night as they did, they understood comparatively little of the clear truth taught in the primitive days of Christianity. The result was that several sects were organized, and this marks the rise of Protestant sectism. The oldest of these is the Lutheran, whose creed—the Augsburg Confession—was formed in A. D. 1530. As before stated, this marks the end of the papal reign, as portrayed in prophecy and revelation.

Turning again to the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, we find a description of the ruling power in Protestantism: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the

first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh 'fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six." Rev. 13: 11-18.

This second beast is Protestantism. The symbolic description of this beast directs us to a political and religious power rising at the expiration of the 1,260 years' reign of the first

beast. This one looks more natural than the first in that it has but two horns. These are England and Germany—the two political powers that have always stood in defense of Protestantism. By these two powers Protestantism arose. It is reasonable that if the ten horns of the first beast represented ten temporal powers that supported it, the two horns of the second beast represented two temporal powers which have always supported it. England and Germany have done this, and they are two of the original ten. His two horns like a lamb signify the tolerance and mildness of these nations, as well as of Protestantism as a whole. Though this beast was lamb-like, yet it spake as a dragon. The dragon-power was even traceable down through the Protestant age. This two-horned beast was to exercise all the power of the first beast before him. Popery, as we have seen in a previous chapter, exercised a universal influence, swayed universal dominion; therefore to exercise the same power of the first beast, Protestantism must exercise a universal influence. This it has surely done. Protestantism is the universal religion of the so-called Christian world, just as popery once was.

It may be a question in the mind of some how Protestantism, divided in so many different bodies, can be represented by one beast. The Protestant sects are all alike in character, from God's standpoint of viewing, just as the multitudinous forms of heathen worship are represented in the twelfth chapter by the single symbol of a dragon.

This second beast was to cause the people to worship the first beast. This has been accomplished by Protestantism perpetuating doctrines and services of popery. All her creeds are tinged more or less with the doctrines and idolatries of Roman Catholicism. Many things—for example, the rite of sprinkling, which Rome substituted for baptism—have been copied by most of the Protestant sects. Infant baptism, infant damnation unless baptized, baptism for the forgiveness of past sins, confirmation, taking members into an exterior institution—these and many other things have been copied from Rome by Protestants to cause the people to worship as the papists worshiped, thus causing them to worship the first beast.

This second beast was to do great wonders, even to bring fire down from heaven and by

means of this gain the confidence of the people and influence them to make an image to the first beast. Many hundreds of these images have been made in the Protestant age. Such are the Protestant ecclesiastical organizations. Every one of these is but an image of the papal sect, all being modeled after it. We can understand this prophecy better if we understand the ancient image-worship of the pagans. They made images of their gods and bowed to these images and worshiped them. The image was supposed to resemble the god. This same image-worship was continued among the Roman Catholics, who called their gods saints. Protestantism continues the same worship in essence by making images to the papacy and causing the people to worship them. This is another way in which Protestantism "causeth the people to worship the first beast." These sect-images of popery are the only gods that many people of today really worship. Every sect called Protestant, whether great or small, is more or less modeled after the organization known as the Catholic church; therefore they are all properly termed images, or likenesses, of that beast.

Many of the Protestant denominations started with a spiritual reformation. When the Lutheran reformation started, it was a spiritual work. The heavenly fire fell in some places, and God honored the work. The same was true of Zwingli's work in Switzerland. But when the followers of Luther and of Zwingli saw that God was specially favoring them, they at once organized. The result was two sects, two images of the papal beast. As soon as these people made an image, they lost their spiritual power, and they are today but formal bubbles sailing along on the agitated sea of sect-confusion. Just so it was with the Wesleyan reform. For about fifty years the world shook under the labors of Charles and John Wesley. Watch-fires were kindled throughout Europe and America, and torrents of Holy-Spirit fire fell from heaven. No other fire comes from heaven. After a great body was thus called out, they became deceived because God was specially favoring them, and organized into a sect, or, in other words, made an image to the old, or papal, beast. As soon as they did this, they lost their spirituality, and today they are a dead, formal body. The very doctrine with which Wesley

started his reform is today rejected by a large number of the Methodist divines. A number of years ago B. T. Roberts and several other Methodist ministers began to preach holiness, and the result was an excommunication. These preachers then began to shout, "We are free! We are free!" But not willing to give up the name Methodists, they organized an image that they term Free Methodists. These people are now as dead spiritually as their mother. Their work is accompanied by much noise but little power of God. So it has been throughout the entire Protestant age.

The work of Alexander Campbell in preaching against the evils of sectarianism and division, and in maintaining the necessity of unity among all true believers, was a spiritual work, and no doubt God blessed in that reformation. But soon they organized on the same plane with every other sect, and now they are a spiritually dead body. Time and again men have received some new light and truth, and have started a spiritual work. Fire from heaven would fall, and God would bless their labors. But not being able to discern the body of Christ, which only is the church, these people would organ-

ize a human system, call it a church, and these systems are but images.

It may be asked how people become deceived as a result of this fire which came from heaven, or spiritual reformation. I answer as follows: Speak to any of the various sects today whose work started in a spiritual reformation, and invariably they will point to such reformation as an excuse for the existence of their sect. In this they are deceived. The various branches of Methodism today, which number nearly one hundred, will, when interrogated on this subject, point back to the work of Wesley and the spiritual reformation of his time as an excuse for the existence of their sects. In this they are deceived. While the work of Wesley was spiritual and fire from heaven fell under his labors, yet Wesley and his work gave no excuse whatever for the modern sects called after his name. The same is true of the Lutherans. With all their dead formality and lack of spiritual godliness and vital salvation, if you speak to them about coming out of and forsaking the formal institution in which they live and hold membership, they will point you back to the work and reformation by Martin Luther as an

excuse for the existence of their sect. In this they, like the Methodists, are deceived; for the work and reformation effected by Luther is no foundation nor cause for the existence of the Lutheran sect.

Not all the sects of Protestantism, however, started with a spiritual reformation. Many of their founders claimed to be effecting real reformation in the earth, whereas these were only pretensions. Fire from heaven upon Elijah's sacrifice was the attestation of his divine mission; the falling of the fire confirmed the fact that Elijah was God's prophet. Many of the sects of today will point to some fanatical movement stimulated more by excitement than by real Holy-Spirit fire, as an excuse for the existence of their institution. Such is true of nearly all the modern holiness sects, tongues movements, etc. As Bro. F. G. Smith, in his work, "The Revelation Explained," says:

"The pretentious miracles and mighty works done in the various movements of our day have resulted in the deception of multitudes of people and the creation of new sects. Only a few of the Protestant sects of today were preceded by a reformation that was truly spiritual and

of God, and the salvation-work done among them before their lapse into sectarianism, I can not attribute to this false prophet. For lack of sufficient light, however, they also submitted to human organizations just as did those who were deceived in movements wholly deceptive and false from the beginning. But in that case they did not thereby become false worshipers, and those of that class who retain their spirituality are the ones whom the Lord denominates his people. When the voice is heard calling them out of Babylon, the numerous communicants of Protestantism, its great revivals so called, its financial enterprises, its missionary efforts, its civilizing effects on barbarous nations, its social, moral, and intellectual influences upon the race—all these mighty works are brought forward to prove that the system is of God. But in this they deceive themselves, for this is not sufficient to show that this beast is a true prophet, when on account of the deceptions practised God has denominated him a false prophet."

True, the term "false prophet" with reference to the beast includes both the religion and the institution of Protestantism; but, in reality,

the beast in Revelation 13, which is said to have brought fire from heaven, refers more to Protestantism as a religion than to the sectarian institution, for this is clearly referred to as an image made to the first beast. So while the sects of Protestantism that have been the outgrowth of spiritual reformations have brought real fire down from heaven, those that have been the outgrowth of man have never done this, but have been wild-fire, fanatical movements filled with more excitement than spirituality, and, as Brother Smith says in his work, have "only pretended to bring fire from heaven." In both cases, people have been deceived, and so they point to such spiritual reformations or such seasons of excitement and false enthusiasm as an excuse for the existence of their various institutions. All these systems are but images to popery.

As soon as these images were formed, the next step was to mark their subjects. The poor blind Adventists suppose that this mark is keeping Sunday, but this is folly and ignorance. This mark signifies the instilling of the doctrines of the various sects into the minds of their adherents. The members of every sect organization are indelibly marked. You can not become

one of them without solemnly agreeing to believe the doctrines taught in their disciplines, accepting the government of their man-made institutions, subscribing to the rules of faith that originate with the sect. This shows how its members worship the beast. The mark in the right hand may signify the right hand of fellowship, which takes them into these institutions. It is further said "that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Jesus said to his ministers, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Paul says that he made the gospel of Christ without charge. God's ministers received the everlasting gospel which they preach, from the Lord. They receive it free. The anointing teaches them; they are taught of God. Hence they give the gospel out free. But in sect-Babylon the ministers make merchandise of the gospel and of the people. They traffic; that is, buy and sell. What they preach costs them considerable. They must take a certain course in order to get the theology they are to preach to the people. So after they obtain it, they hire out and sell it for so much a year. "They can never have enough . . . all look to their own

way, every one for his gain from his quarter." Isa. 56:9, 11. Every sect has its perculiar mark or doctrine with which to mark its adherents. Sectarians have erected "preacher factories" for the express purpose of marking their ministers with their particular marks. For example, a Methodist seminary will never send out Lutheran preachers. A Presbyterian seminary never sends out Baptist preachers who preach Baptist doctrine. Ah, they receive another mark.

A man must have the doctrines of Babylon and belong to one of the various Protestant sects or he will not be allowed to preach in their houses of worship. A few years ago a brother in the ministry went into a certain town to find a place to conduct a series of holiness meetings. He was directed by a Presbyterian lady to their pastor, whom she said was a believer in the doctrine of holiness. When the brother called on the minister and made known his errand, the first question asked him was this: "Are you a member of the Presbyterian church?" The brother answered in the negative. He did not have the *name of the beast.* The next question that greeted him was this:

"Do you believe the Westminster confession of faith to be orthodox?" He answered, "No, sir." He did not have the *mark of the beast.* The last question asked was: "Do you belong to any of the various orthodox Protestant denominations?" The brother said, "No." He did not have the *number of his name.* The answer was, "You can not have our house." This explains what is meant by not allowing any one to buy and sell—preach the gospel—except those who have the name, mark, and number of the name of the beast. This has a real fulfilment in Protestantism today.

There is one more point I will explain here. The second beast represents Protestantism as a whole, or the religion of Protestantism, while the image represents the sectarian institution—the sect organizations. The number 666, which was to make up the second beast, signifies the great multiplicity of sects that make up Protestantism. Without any reflection whatever upon the spiritual reformations during the age of Protestantism, and the many revivals that were held there in years past, the sect institutions themselves were never used of God. God simply worked through the humble instrumen-

tality of his people who had been led honestly into these denominations. The oldest of the Protestant sects is the Lutheran. As before observed, its creed was formed in 1530. Since that time all the other sects of Protestantism, numbering nearly one thousand, have arisen. At different times men have come out of the older institutions and have preached some truth that had died out in those older organizations; but, not discerning the body of Christ, which only is the church, they have formed their followers into sects—humanly organized bodies with human government, human creeds, human disciplines. These organizations they have called churches. The very foundation of Protestantism is sectish strife and division. When weighed in the balance of God's Word, it is found sadly wanting.

The New Testament teaches one faith, one baptism, one body—the church—one fold, one heart and soul, one mind, no division. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1: 10. In

the light of this text either the Bible is wrong or sectism is wrong. We are forced to one conclusion or the other. It is a fact that in denominationalism today the members do not all speak the same thing. They are not perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. I ask, In what are the various denominations united? They claim to be one in the essentials, but somewhat divided on the non-essentials. But what are the essentials? Is baptism one of them? Is it not an essential, since Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"? Do these men all speak the same thing on baptism? Nay verily. As to mode, one preacher teaches that sprinkling is the only true mode, another that pouring is the Scriptural mode, another that triune immersion is the Biblical action in baptism, while still others teach that single immersion only is baptism. Many sects teach against baptism in any mode or form; and there are those who teach that either sprinkling, pouring, or immersion is baptism. With respect to the design of baptism, one minister teaches that in this ordinance sins are washed away, another that it is the door into the church, another that through

baptism the new birth is effected and our names written in heaven, and still others that baptism is only for justified believers. Some teach infant sprinkling, others do not. Thus on this essential truth, the ministers of sectism and their devotees do not fulfil the scripture, "All speak the same thing." This is true not only of the ordinances, but of all other essential New-Testament doctrines. Protestants are divided on the divinity of Jesus Christ. They are divided on the work of the Holy Spirit. They have various ideas regarding God himself. Therefore I repeat that either this text of Scripture is wrong or sectism is wrong.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psa. 133: 1. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 2:1. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they

had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4: 31-33. "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." Acts 5: 12-16.

This blessed power and unity of apostolic days is a complete stranger to Protestants. They are scattered in hundreds of sects, adhere to so many different faiths, and belong to as many separate bodies. In a small town in our land a dozen or more steeples will be seen, and on Lord's day morning the people will congregate

in a dozen different places and profess to worship God. Oh, what a picture modern so-called Christianity presents to the poor sinner! In the early church the children of God in a town were found all of one accord in one place. They dwelt together in unity. The result was, the world believed and the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved. But Protestantism presents a divided religion, and the result is skepticism and infidelity. The following scriptures describe the condition of Protestantism:

"Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Rom. 16:17, 18. The Lord gathers his people into one fold, into one body. "Ye are called in one body." He reconciles "all in one body by the cross." That one body is his church. And to all such he delivers the one faith of the gospel to observe. When the honest people thus saved and gathered into one fold are persuaded and led by ministers, so-called

preachers of the gospel, into other folds and other bodies than the body of Christ, and are required to subscribe to faiths and creeds written by men, instead of the faith of the gospel, this is making or causing division contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and we are told to avoid such persons. Let me give an illustration.

Suppose that in a town the pure gospel of salvation is presented and one hundred people are converted to God. Through conversion those one hundred souls are joined to the Lord, and the same love and spirit that in salvation join them to the Lord join them to each other. Thus they are made members of the church of God and constitute a local assembly of the true church. They belong to nothing but Christ. They have no faith but the gospel, no creed but the Word of God. Their names are written in heaven. Their bond of union is the love of God. They love each other, and love binds their hearts together. The Spirit of God draws them together in meeting, and therefore they "forsake not the assembling of themselves together." The Lord calls some to the work of elders, others to the work of deacons. After

such have proved themselves, they are ordained by the imposition of hands to the work to which the Lord has called them. This is the church of God in its local sense.

Now suppose that, for want of better light, a Methodist minister approaches this congregation of believers and persuades twenty to join his sect, and that a Dunkard, a Quaker, a Baptist, and a Wesleyan minister do likewise. Now instead of meeting in one place, the hundred assemble in five different places of worship. Before, one minister could preach to them all; now, it requires five. Before, they had one faith, the simple faith of the gospel; now, they have five different faiths. They are divided on baptism, its designs and its mode; they are divided on the Lord's Supper, on feet-washing, on the manner of obtaining salvation, and on many other things too numerous to mention. Woe be to the pastors that thus destroy and scatter the sheep of God's pasture! These are the very men that make division contrary to the doctrine of the Bible. Some of them have been traditionized to believe that they are doing God's service, but we hope and pray that God will enable them to comprehend his truth and that they may re-

nounce all such deception and abide in the one and only true church of the living God.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." 2 Pet. 2:1-3. "And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them? They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?" Hab. 1:14-17. False prophets scatter and divide the people of God by leading them into their sects. With

good words and fair speeches they deceive the people and make merchandise of them. Multitudes of cold professors will not endure sound doctrine, but heap to themselves these teachers who turn away their ears from the truth unto fables. The more people these preachers can gather into their drag, the more they rejoice, "supposing gain is godliness." Many of them sacrifice to their drag—sect—more than they do to their God. Thus they slay the nations. Woe unto you sectarian preachers, blind guides, hypocrites! You compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when he is made, he is twofold more the child of hell than when you found him. You are the very ones who are making division contrary to the doctrine of Christ, and we are commanded to avoid you. You oppose the truth, not only refusing to obey it yourselves, but also hindering those who would. Thus you are likened unto whitened sepulchers, which appear beautiful outward: within you are full of uncleanness, hypocrisies, and iniquity. For a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you shall receive the greater damnation. The pulpits of Protestantism are filled with a hireling ministry, a worthless set of preachers, who

love greetings in the market and the highest seats of honor, who love the praise of men more than the praise of God, and who are filled with pride and formality.

Turning again to the eleventh chapter of Revelation, we find mention of two prophets—the Word and Spirit of God—the true vicars of Christ during the Protestant age. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them." Verses 7-11.

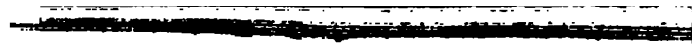
In this prophecy we see that the beast finally succeeded in slaying the two prophets that he had been fighting for 1,260 years. The first part of this prophecy we have already considered in the reign of popery. After the 1,260 years of papacy, they lay dead three days and a half. This was fulfilled when those children of God who had been standing out clear against popery in the papal age united with Protestantism. Protestantism, as well as Romanism, accepts human vicars. Protestants bitterly oppose the government of the church by the Word and Spirit of God, and set up human vicars, who are their lawmakers and governors. Whether the vicar be one individual or a legislative body, it is a human vicar just the same; and when all God's people throughout the world accepted human vicars, the two prophets—the Word and Spirit of God—were virtually slain.

The three days and a half during which they were to lie dead signify three and one-half centuries, or three hundred and fifty years. The term "day" when applied to the papal age signifies a year, and when applied to the Protestant age it signifies a century. There is reason for this. The events of each century of the

Protestant age are naturally divided into separate periods. The divisions of the centuries of of the Protestant age are so marked that historians have adopted them. The following quotation from D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, book II, chap. 9, is a fair sample of the use historians have made of this figure: "It has been said that the three last centuries, the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the eighteenth, may be conceived as an immense battle of three days' duration. We willingly adopt this comparison. The first day was the battle of God; the second, the battle of the priest; the third, the battle of reason. What will be the fourth? In our opinion the confused strife and deadly contest of all these powers together is to end in the victory of Him to whom triumph belongs." It is because the centuries of the Protestant age are thus divided into separate periods that God makes use of a day to signify a century. Counting, therefore, a day for a hundred years, we see that the three days and a half during which the two prophets were to lie dead signify three hundred and fifty years.

During this period the people were to make merry because the two prophets did not tor-

ment them. Ah, the Protestant people have been fulfilling this to the letter in their shameful socials and revelings. Measuring this 350 years from 1530, the date when the two prophets were slain, we have the year 1880, at which time, according to the prophecy, the spirit of life from God was to enter into the two prophets. So the reader can see that we are now living in the age when the Word and the Spirit of God were to resume their places as sole governors of the church of God. The gathering together of God's people out of sects into the one body, a process which has been taking place since 1880, is due to the resurrection of the Word and Spirit of God. The kingdom of God again triumphs upon earth.



The Church of God and Sects Contrasted.

In this chapter I will briefly contrast the church of God and sects. Many of the points that I shall consider have already been touched, but I wish to present them here in such a manner as to draw a clear line of distinction and contrast between the true church of God and all sect institutions.

First. *The church of God was built by Christ, whereas all sects have been founded by man.* "And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18. Three things stand out prominent in this text. First, Christ is the builder, founder, and organizer of his church. "I will build" shows that the church of God is not man-made, but is of divine origin. It was prophesied by Daniel as a kingdom set up by the God of heaven. "It is the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8:2. All sects have been organized by men. The church of God is divine; all sects are human. The former was built by Christ; the latter, by men. Christ built but one church. Since sects are

separated into multiplied divisions, God is not their author; for he is not the author of confusion, but of peace. The church that Christ built he denominates "my church." No sect, then, is his church, for sects were all built by man. Since they are not Christ's, they belong to men and the devil; for there is no neutral ground. The church that Christ built was to stand eternally. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "It shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44. Since it was to stand forever, it is in existence today. The same church that Christ built nineteen centuries ago is still standing. In it alone we hold membership; to it alone we belong. Thank God, it will stand while the cycles of ages roll.

Another point of contrast. In A. D. 32 Jesus said, "I will build my church." In A. D. 33 "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). This proves that the church of God was already built. Its complete organization dates from Pentecost. Since all sects have come into existence since A. D. 33, not one of them is the Bible church. Of sect-Babylon, the Catholic is the oldest, but its organization does not date back farther than

the third or fourth century. The Lutheran is the oldest sect of Protestantism, but its creed was not formed until A. D. 1530. Since that date all the other sects of Protestantism have arisen. They can not be God's church, for it was centuries old before they came into existence. It is the true; they are false. It is the real; they are substitutes. It is the genuine; they are all counterfeits. We, as the saints of the Most High, discard all the latter and abide in the former. We cling to the church of God and reject all sects. Are we not orthodox in so doing? Who can deny it?

But some will say, "The churches [meaning sects] are necessary to the government, the organization, and the success of the people of God." If this is true, how does it come that in the days of primitive Christianity and for centuries before these sects arose, the people of God got along so well without them? What improvement have modern sects made on the government, the organization, or the success of Christianity? Let the devotees of sect-Babylon answer. "But," says one, "the church of God in the days of the apostles was a perfect organization." So it was, and so it is today. We

abide in that very church that in the days of the apostles had government and was perfectly organized; and, thank God, its government or its organization has never changed. Then why plead for worthless sects? There was no Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Disciple, Mennonite, Dunkard, Shaker, Quaker, Free-Methodist, Amish, Episcopalian, Pentecost Band, Christian Catholic, Gospel Worker, Universalist, Mormon, Adventist, United Brethren, etc., in the days of primitive Christianity. All these sects have arisen since. Did not the cause of Christ prosper more in the earth before their existence than since?

Second. *The church of God is the body of Christ; no sect composes this body; therefore no sect on earth is the church.* "His body's sake, which is the church." Col. 1:24. "He is the head of the body, the church." Verse 18. "The church which is his body." Eph. 1:22, 23. These texts are conclusive; the church is Christ's body. This body is composed of all the saved. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor. 12:27. Since there are other bodies, and these are no part of the church; and since the church ex-

isted centuries before modern sects arose, and that church was the body of Christ, it follows that the modern sects can not be the true church.

Third. *All Christians belong to the church of God. No sect contains all Christians.* Reader, observe this truth. The church of God includes in its membership every saved man and woman in heaven and on earth. It is the whole family of God (Eph. 3:15). You can not be a Christian and not a member of the church of God. Whether you are in a sect or out, if you have salvation, you are a member of the Bible church. Since the church of God includes all Christians, it is not a sect; it is the whole. We, the saints of God, through salvation are members of the church of God. We belong to no other institution. Therefore we are not members of any sect, but of the whole, the family entire. To become a sect, we should have to organize and join another body than the body of Christ. What, then, is a sect? Any institution that does not include in its membership every saint in heaven and on earth. For example, does the Methodist denomination include the whole family of God? If so, there are no Christians outside of this particular organization. To admit

that there are saved people outside or elsewhere is to admit that that institution is not the church of God. Not one sect on earth includes all Christians; therefore no sect could be God's church. But when goaded and nettled by this positive truth, sectarians cry, that all the churches (meaning sects) together constitute the church of God. If so, then all the sects taken together include all the saved in heaven and on earth. Do they? They all know better. Thousands and millions in paradise are members of the church of God who were never members of any sect on earth. More than this, there are tens of thousands of saints upon earth who do not hold membership in any of the modern sects, yet stand complete in Christ and are members of his church. And again, if all sects taken together, Catholic and Protestant, compose God's church, where was his church before they arose? Ah, God's church existed one thousand five hundred years before the first Protestant sect was organized. So it is separate from all sects and they form no part of it.

Another thought. God's church will exist through all eternity, whereas all sects will cease

to exist when time ends. So view the subject from whatever standpoint you may, there is no relation between the church of God and modern sects. To point men to, and lead them into, sects by trying to identify these institutions with the Bible church is to make the truth of God falsehood and to become guilty of the sin of heresy. God help all honest souls to forsake all sects and abide in the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

"But," say these people, "are you not a sect yourselves? Are you not narrow?" No. In order to become a sect, we must organize a separate institution from the body of Christ. Thank God, we renounce all such institutions and abide only in Christ. Instead of being narrow and sectish, we are members of the only Bible church, the one to which all Christians belong. Therefore the whole family of God are our brethren and sisters. We have fellowship with all the saved. We simply renounce sects and all evil, but recognize the few scattered believers who, for want of better light, are still held in these fallen institutions.

Fourth. *Christ is the head of but one body; sects comprise many separate bodies; hence*

Christ is not their head. "And he is the head of the body, the church." Col. 1:18. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Rom. 12:5. "There is one body and one Spirit." Eph. 4:4. The body is one, or "one body" (Col. 12:12). "Baptized into one body." Verse 13. "Reconciled in one body." Eph. 2:16. "Called in one body." Col. 3:15. The fact that there is only one body proves that there is but one church. Hence all other bodies are out of Christ. Sectism presents almost a thousand separate and distinct bodies. We prove our loyalty to God by abiding only in the one body—the church of God—and by rejecting all others as antichristian. If the multiplied organized bodies of sect-Babylon are right, then the Bible is wrong; for if the Bible is true, there is but one body, one church in Christ, and all others are antichristian. Reader, stand by the truth and let sects fall. Flee out of the midst of Babylon and deliver every man his soul. Christ is the head of but one body—his body. No sect, then, has Christ for its head. They have only human heads. As head of the church, Christ is its law-

giver. He has given us the law—the New Testament—for the perfect government of his church. Sects have to revise their laws or discipline, whereas the law of the Lord is perfect and needs no revision.

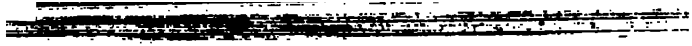
Fifth. *Salvation makes us members of the church of God, but not of any sect.* This point is worthy of careful consideration. Jesus said, "I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." John 10:9. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47. The church and the kingdom are the same. Conversion puts us into the kingdom (Matt. 18:3); through the new birth we enter it (John 3:3-5). The moment a sinner receives pardon, that moment he becomes a member of the church of God. Does conversion make one a member of the Baptist, of the Methodist, of the Dunkard, or of any other sect? It does not. These one must join. Some sects claim to be orthodox, among them the Christian, the Disciples, and the Catholic. But when a sinner repents and gets salvation, that does not make him a member of any of the above sects. Yet he is a member of the church of God. So with all their boastful claims, they are

classed with the sects of fallen Babylon. The only way to obtain membership in the new-testament church is to get salvation; so all its members are saved. We lose our membership in the church of God the moment we commit sin. "He that committeth sin is of the devil." 1 John 3:8. But sects are full of sinners. There is no identity whatever between the church that Christ built and sect-Babylon.

Sixth. *Christ takes the members into his church, whereas the preacher takes members into the sect.* "But now hath God set the members every one in the body as it hath pleased him." 1 Cor. 12:18. "The Lord added to the church daily." Acts 2:47. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col. 1:13. Inducting into the church of God is a work of the Almighty. Men can not take you in. They can preach the Word, instruct souls in the way of righteousness, but setting us in the church is beyond their power. "God sets the members every one of them in the body." When a sinner repents and complies with all the Bible requirements, the Lord saves him and adds him to the church of God. He

has not, by virtue of salvation, been added to any sect. The preacher takes him into these institutions. But their excuse is this: They say that the Lord saves and adds to the invisible church, while they take members into the visible. In this, however, they are mistaken. The church of God existed centuries before their sects arose. Was it visible or invisible? Was the church of God in the days of the apostles an invisble institution? No; it was visible. The same is true today.

So from whatever standpoint we may view sectarian institutions in the light of the Bible, they are no part of, and have no identity with, the pure church of God. Hence there is positively no lawful excuse for their existence.



A Cloudy Time.

The Protestant age is well represented in Scripture as a cloudy day. The primitive glory was seen as a morning without clouds; the papal age, as a long dark night. The Protestant age is far from the transplendent light and glory of the apostolic days, and yet it is not so dark as the time when popery ruled the religious world. The Protestant age presents a mixture of truth and error, of light and darkness, of salvation and sin. It is not clear day, as in the beginning, nor yet dark night, as was the age before it. Thus saith the prophet: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light; and bright ones shall withdraw themselves: but it shall be one day which is known unto Jehovah; not day, and not night." Zech. 14:6, 7, American Standard Version.

The day foreseen in the above prophecy is the gospel day. First there was to be a clear morning, a beautiful sunrise. In that time the holy saints, like stars, shone brilliantly in the midst of this earth. But it was foreseen that these "bright ones" would withdraw themselves. The thousands who were martyred as-

cended to paradise; others lost the illumination—holiness—and drifted into apostasy; and those who remained true retired into a wilderness state of obscurity, while a beast-power, under a great apostate church, came visibly upon the field. This was a time of night. Of this period the prophet said, "There shall not be light." Following this period there was to be a time when it was "not day, and not night." This applies to the Protestant era. Ezekiel foretold this in the following words: "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Ezek. 34: 12. The era of Protestantism is the time during which God's people have been scattered; and this period is termed a cloudy day—a mixture of light and darkness.

Downfall of Spiritual Babylon.

In the Old Testament we read that the Israelites were carried away captive into literal Babylon, and that within its gorgeous palaces and impregnable walls they served for seventy years. During the time of their captivity Jerusalem and the sanctuary lay waste—a heap of ruins. But through the prophets God foretold the awful judgments that he was about to pour out upon the city and land of their captivity. Jeremiah foretold that the broad walls of Babylon would fall, that the city would be burned with fire, that the land would be emptied, and that the entire place would be left in perpetual desolations (see Jer. 25:7-13; 50th and 51st chapters). God delivered all his people out of all the land of the Chaldees (see Jer. 50:4, 5, 17-19; 51:2, 6-10, 45). He warned them to flee out and deliver their souls, for his wrath and vengeance would fall upon Babylon.

All this was typical. The literal city of Babylon was a type of the apostate church, a type of sectism as it exists in this dispensation. As we have seen in Rev. 17:1-18, the Roman Catho-

lic sect is denominated "Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." She is also termed "the great whore." She is a "mother." She has a large family of daughters. They also are "harlots." These harlot daughters are none other than the sects which came out of her; and these have produced many children and grandchildren, yes, and great-grandchildren. All these harlot institutions—called churches—are of one blood and constitute one great family. All are traceable to Rome, their mother. With the most tender love to all honest souls still held captive in these cages of deception, we declare that, in the light of truth, Satan is the father of sectism, Rome its mother. It forms no part of the pure bride of Christ. As the mother's name is Babylon, we conclude that this is the family name. The multiplicity of human sects, from the mother down to the very latest daughter born into the family, are Mystery, Babylon, "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:5, 18).

Just as literal Babylon held the Israelities captive until God proclaimed his desolating judgments upon her, and warned Israel to flee

out of her; so has this great spiritual Babylon held under its tyrannical rule and galling yokes the true people of God for centuries past. But a voice from heaven proclaims her fall. An angel having great power is heard crying "mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.... For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:1-5).

It is very evident that the fall referred to is a moral one. In the younger days of many of the sects they were of better character than in after-years. When they came out of Rome, their mother, they started with reform; but soon they degenerated and became dead and formal. There were times in the past when certain sects of Babylon contained many true people of God. God worked through these people, great revivals were held, and thousands were saved. In those days some of the ministers were real humble, self-sacrificing men, and God wonderfully used them. But oh, how changed! If some such men as Luther, Wesley, Fletcher, Dow, Peter

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Cartwright, John Knox, and others of like experience were to break into the dead, cold assemblies of modern sectism, they would be expelled as fanatics and fined for disturbing the peace of the worshipers. The whole city is morally fallen. It is cursed with a hireling ministry; an honor-seeking clergy; a proud, lazy, worthless, sensual lot of preachers who have a form of godliness, but deny God's mighty power to save and sanctify, keep and heal; a lot of truth-fighters, who despise God's pure saints and oppose Bible unity. True, there are exceptions, but these are few. And as are the leaders, so are the followers. The following additional evidence is from "The Revelation Explained," by F. G. Smith:

"That this application of the term, 'Babylon' is correct, and also that the fallen condition ascribed to her is in accordance with the facts, I will prove by the following testimonies of Protestants themselves. The first is from Vision of the Ages; or, Lectures on the Apocalypse, by B. W. Johnson, member of the Christian sect.

" 'It is needful to inquire what the term "Babylon" means. It occurs several times in the

New Testament. Here [in the Apocalypse] it is spoken of as "that great city," and her fall is doomed "because she hath made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication." In Rev. 17:5, a scarlet harlot is seen sitting upon the seven-headed and ten-horned monster, and upon her forehead is written, "Mystery, Babylon the Great." With this woman the kings of the earth are said to have committed fornication. In chapter 18 the fall of the great city, Babylon is detailed at length, and it is again said that all the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her. The harlot with Babylon stamped on her brow, and the great city of fornication styled Babylon, in chapters 14 and 18 are one and the same existence.

" 'There is an ancient city of Babylon often mentioned in the Old Testament, but ages before John wrote, it had ceased to be inhabited; the only dwellers among its lonely ruins were howling beasts and hissing serpents. It has never been rebuilt to this day and has passed away forever. John refers therefore not to old Babylon, but to some power yet unseen (when he was upon earth), that should be revealed in due time, and of which old Babylon was a symbol.

Let us notice some of the features of ancient Babylon.

"'1. On that site took place the confusion of tongues which divided those who before had been of one speech and one family, into various tribes and schisms at variance with each other and of various tongues. The word "Babylon," a memorial of this event, means confusion, and is derived from Babel.

"'2. Old Babylon persecuted the people of God and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem.

"'3. It carried the people of God into captivity.

"'4. It was a mighty, resistless universal empire.

"'The antitype, the spiritual Babylon, must correspond. There is a power that exhibits all these characteristics. By apostasy from the truth it originated the schism which has divided the family of God into different sects and parties which speak a different spiritual language. It has carried the church into a long captivity by binding upon it the thraldom of superstition. It has been a constant persecutor of the saints, and has enjoyed an almost universal dominion. That power is the woman that sits upon the

seven-headed beast . . . the false woman, symbolical of a false church, the great apostate spiritual dominion of Rome. And we may add, out of which have come—directly or indirectly—*all the religious sects of the present day.*'

"Dr. Barnes says: 'The word "Babylon" became the emblem of all that was haughty and oppressive, and especially of all that persecuted the church of God. The word here [Rev. 18:4] must be used to denote some power that resembled the ancient and literal Babylon in these characteristics. The literal Babylon was no more; but the name might be used properly to denote a similar power.'

"Wm. Kinkade, in Bible Doctrine, page 249, says, 'I think Christ has a true church on earth, but its members are scattered among the various denominations, and are more or less under the influence of mystery Babylon and her daughters.'

"Alexander Campbell says: 'A reformation of popery was attempted in Europe full three centuries ago. It ended in a Protestant hierarchy, and swarms of dissenters. Protestantism has been reformed into Presbyterianism, that into Congregationalism, and that into Baptist-

ism, etc., etc. Methodism has attempted to reform all, but has reformed itself into many forms of Wesleyanism. All of them retain in their bosom—in their ecclesiastical organizations, worship, doctrines, and observances—various relics of popery. They are at best a reformation of popery, and only reformations in part. The doctrines and traditions of men yet impair the power and progress of the gospel in their hands.'—On Baptism, p. 15.

"Again, he says: 'The worshiping establishments now in operation throughout Christendom, increased and cemented by their respective voluminous confessions of faith, and their ecclesiastical constitutions, are not churches of Jesus Christ, but the legitimate daughters of that mother of harlots, the church of Rome.' How any man could possess as much light on this subject as did Mr. Campbell, and then build a sect himself, is more than I can understand.

"Lorenzo Dow says of the Romish church: 'If she be the mother, who are the daughters? It must be the corrupt, national, established churches that came out of her.'—Dow's Life, p. 542.

"In the Religious Encyclopedia, Article An-

tichrist, we read: 'The writer of the book of Revelation tells us he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and receive not of her plagues." If such persons are to be found in the "mother of harlots," with much less hesitation may it be inferred that they are connected with her unchaste daughters, those national churches which are founded upon what are called Protestant principles.'

"In the Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge we read: 'An important question, however, says Mr. Jones, still remains for inquiry: Is Antichrist confined to the church of Rome? The answer is readily returned in the affirmative by Protestants in general; and happy had it been for the world had that been the case. But although we are fully warranted to consider that church as "the mother of harlots," the truth is that by whatsoever arguments we succeed in fixing that odious charge upon her, we shall, by parity of reasoning, be obliged to allow other national churches to be her unchaste daughters, and for this plain reason, among others, because in their very constitution and tendency they are hostile to the nature of the kingdom of Christ.'

"One of Martin Luther's guests remarked that the world might continue fifty years, and he replied: 'Pray God that it may not exist so long; matters would be even worse than they have been. There would rise up infinite sects and schisms, which are at present hidden in men's hearts and nature. No; may the Lord come at once, for there is no amendment to be expected.'

"Mr. Hartly, a learned churchman, has remarked as follows: 'There are many prophecies which declare the fall of the ecclesiastical powers of the Christian world, and though each church seems to flatter itself with the hope of being exempted, yet it is very plain that the prophetical characters belong to all. They all have left the true, pure, simple religion, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men.'

"Says Mr. Simpson, in Plea for Religion: 'We Protestants, too, read the declaration of the third angel against the worshipers of the beast and his image and make ourselves easy under the awful denunciation by applying it exclusively to the church of Rome; never dreaming that they are equally applicable not only to the English, but to every church establishment

in Christendom, which retains any of the marks of the beast. For though the Pope and the church of Rome is at the head of the grand twelve hundred and sixty years' delusion, yet all other churches, of whatever denomination, whether established or tolerated, which partake of the same spirit, or have instituted doctrines and ceremonies inimical to the pure and unadultered gospel of Christ, shall sooner or later share in the fate of that immense fabric of human ordinances.'

"Says Mr. Hopkins: 'There is no reason to consider the antichristian spirit and practises confined to that which is now called the church of Rome. The Protestant churches have much of Antichrist in them, and are far from being wholly reformed from the corruptions and wickedness, in doctrine and practise, in it. Some churches may be more pure and may have proceeded farther in a reformation than others; but where can the church be found which is thoroughly purged from her abominations? None are wholly clear from an antichristian spirit and the fruits of it... And as the church of Rome will have a large share in the cup of indignation and wrath which will be poured out, so all the

Christian world will have a distinguished portion of it: as the inhabitants of it are much more guilty than others. There is great reason to conclude that the world, particularly that part of it called Christian and Protestant, will yet make greater and more rapid advances in all kinds of moral corruption and open wickedness, till it will come to that state in which it will be fully ripe and prepared to be cut down by the sickle of divine justice and wrath.'

"Mr. O. Scott (Wesleyan Methodist) says: 'The church is as deeply infected with a desire for worldly gain as the world. Most of the denominations of the present day might be called *churches of the world,* with more propriety than churches of Christ. The churches have so far gone from primitive Christianity that they need a fresh regeneration—a new kind of religion.'

"Said T. DeWitt Talmage: 'I simply state a fact when I say that in many places the church is surrendering, and the world is conquering. . . . . There is a mighty host in the Christian church, positively professing Christianity, who do not believe the Bible, out and out and in and in. . . . Oh! we have magnificent church machinery in this country; we have sixty thousand

American ministers; we have costly music; we have great Sunday-schools; and yet I give you the appalling statistics that in the last twenty-five years, laying aside last year, the statistics of which I have not yet seen—within the last twenty-five years the churches of God in this country have averaged *less than two conversions a year* each! There has been an average of four or five deaths in the churches. How soon, at that rate, will this world be brought to God? We gain two; we lose four. Eternal God! what will this come to?'

"Bishop Roberts said: 'The popular religion of this country is not the religion of the New Testament. It has some of its features but not all. It is lacking in grand fundamental elements. It answers many good purposes—restrains, refines, elevates, and gives to society a high grade of civilization; but fails to secure the great end which Christianity is designed to accomplish—the salvation of the soul. It dazzles but to blind, it promises but to deceive; it allures by worldly considerations to a heaven of purity, which no worldling can enter; it gives to its votaries, who long to eat of forbidden fruit, the assurance of impunity from the threat-

ened evils, and leads them on by siren strains from the paradise of purity into the broad road which ends at last in the blackness of the darkness of an eternal night of despair!'

"Says the Golden Rule: 'The Protestants are outdoing the popes in splendid, extravagant folly in church-building. Thousands on thousands are expended in gay and costly ornaments to gratify pride and a wicked ambition, that might and should go to redeem the perishing millions! Does the evil, the folly, and the madness of these proud, formal, fashionable worshipers stop here? These splendid monuments of popish pride, upon which millions are squandered in our cities, virtually exclude the poor for whom Christ died, and for whom he came especially to preach.'

"The report of the Michigan Yearly Conference, even as long ago as 1851, published in the True Wesleyan of November 15, says: 'The world, commercial, political, and ecclesiastical, are alike, and are together going in the broad way that leads to death. Politics, commerce, and nominal religion, all connive at sin, reciprocally aid each other, and unite to crush the poor. Falsehood is unblushingly uttered in the

forum and in the pulpit; and *sins that would shock the moral sensibilities of the heathen, go unrebuked in all the great denominations of our land.* These churches are like the Jewish church when the Savior exclaimed, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." '

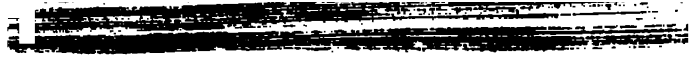
"Robert Atkins, in a sermon preached in London, says: 'The truly righteous are diminished from the earth, and no man layeth it to heart. The professors of religion of the present day, in every church, are lovers of the world, conformers to the world. Lovers of creature-comfort, and aspirers after respectability. They are called to *suffer* with Christ, but they shrink even from reproach. Apostasy, *apostasy,* APOSTASY, is engraven on the very front of every church; and did they know it, and did they feel it, there might be hope; but alas! they cry, "We are rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing." '

"I have by no means exhausted the supply of similar testimonies of Protestants now before me, but for lack of space I must conclude. In the face of these amazing facts can any one deny that Protestantism is a part of great Babylon and is in a fallen condition?

"'The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.' A certain writer on this text has said: 'Who take the lead in all the extravagancies of the age? Church-members. Who load their tables with the richest and choicest viands? Church-members. Who are foremost in extravagance in dress, and all costly attire? Church-members. Who are the very personification of pride and arrogance? Church-members. Where shall we look for the very highest exhibition of the luxury, even show, and pride of life, resulting from the vanity and sin of the race? Answer, To a modern church-assembly on a pleasant Sunday.' Though this writer interpreted the text literally, yet he spoke a vast amount of truth, as every one knows.

"Consider, too, the wickedness carried on everywhere in sect-Babylon unrebuked, with the preachers ofttimes in the lead. Shows, festivals, frolics, grab-bag parties, cake-walk lotteries, kissing-bees, etc. If the apostle [John] were here today and we should inform him of a modern church entertainment where a bared female foot, projecting from beneath a curtain, was sold to the highest gentleman bidder, who

had the privilege of kissing its owner and taking her to supper, he would probably answer, 'Have I not told you, "Babylon is fallen"?' If his attention were called to the fact that the members of a prominent church, in a novel entertainment, displayed the likeness of a donkey, minus the tail, while the members one by one were blindfolded, and, amid the uproarous laughter of the crowd assembled, were given the detached part to see who could place it the nearest where it belonged, he would say with double emphasis, '*Have I not told you,* "BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN, AND IS BECOME THE HABITATION OF DEVILS, AND THE HOLD OF EVERY FOUL SPIRIT, AND A CAGE OF EVERY UNCLEAN AND HATEFUL BIRD"?' The 'abominations' are by no means confined to the *mother* in the Revelation, but are also to be found in abundance in connection with her harlot daughters."



God Calls His People Out.

Israel was a type of the church. Her captivity of seventy years in literal Babylon was a striking figure of the captivity of the church in spiritual Babylon; that is, in popery and Protestant sectism. During this time the holy city (church) was trodden under foot; was covered up under the ecclesiastical rubbish of men, just as Jerusalem was a heap of ruins and rubbish while the children of Israel were in Babylon. But as seen in a previous chapter, the children of Israel returned from their Babylonish captivity, restored Jerusalem and Zion, and built up the house of God again. They finally all forsook Babylon. God delivered all his people out of the land of the Chaldees. "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." Jer. 50:4,

5. "My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord." Jer. 51:45.

Babylon had been a golden cup in the Lord's hand in accomplishing his design in bringing evil upon Israel because of their iniquities. God Almighty himself brought Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean hosts to Jerusalem, and through them he accomplished his will in destroying the Jewish polity (2 Chron. 36:17). God also used Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, during the captivity in fulfilling his will in many ways. But the time came when God set forth his hand and gathered all the children of Israel back to Zion and Jerusalem. The return of Israel from their captivity in Babylon to Zion and Jerusalem was a precious type of the return of the church from their captivity in spiritual sect-Babylon to the new Jerusalem, the spiritual Zion, and mount of holiness. Thank God! this blessed gathering is now taking place.

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools,

shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. 35:8-10. "There shall be there a pure way, and it shall be called a holy way; and there shall not pass by there any unclean person, neither shall there be there an unclean way; but the dispersed shall walk on it, and they shall not go astray. And there shall be no lion there, neither shall any evil beast go up upon it, nor at all be found there; but the redeemed and gathered on the Lord's behalf, shall walk in it, and shall return, and come to Sion with joy, and everlasting joy shall be over their head; for on their heads shall be praise and exultation, and joy shall take possession of them: sorrow and pain, and groaning have fled away." Isa. 35:8-10, LXX. On the pure way of holiness thousands are today returning to Zion—to the same Zion where the early church stood. Forsaking the confusion of sect Babylon, the redeemed of the Lord are returning

to the same standard of unity, purity, and power that adorned the apostolic church.

"Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Isa. 51:11. "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." Obadiah 17. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." Joel 3:14, 16, 17. These texts have a present fulfilment. Under the present judgments of truth, multitudes are being brought into the valley of decision, where they must decide either for or against God. Those who decide on the side of truth come to the

mount of holiness, the mount of deliverance; and in this holy mount the Lord has made a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees.

This gathering of God's people out of sect-Babylon back to Zion, into one fold, was foretold by Ezekiel as follows: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen

that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing." Ezek. 34:10-12, 14, 16, 26. This very beautifully sets forth the "present truth." The preachers of Babylon have scattered God's flock, but the time has arrived when the Lord is seeking out his sheep. He is gathering them out of all places where they have been scattered, and is bringing them to their own fold—a good fold.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5. This is a perfect picture of fallen Babylon today. Sectism is filled with men and women who are lovers of pleasure more than

lovers of God, people who have only a mere form of godliness. What are God's people who are yet scattered there commanded to do? What saith the Scripture? "From such withdraw thyself: from such turn away." No honest soul can remain there after hearing this solemn command. They must forsake the ruins and abide in Christ alone. Some precious souls when they hear the voice from heaven to come out of sectism, refuse to obey, and in consequence they go into darkness.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord

Almighty." 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Every sect institution yokes up believers with unbelievers. They try to mix light with darkness. The command from heaven to every child of God in there is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

The ministers of God in these last days are "blowing the trumpet in Zion," and the call of God is reaching the people of God in sectarian captivity. Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." Thus God is gathering his people into a perfect unity, and preparing the bride for the coming of the bridegroom. To such as have their hearts wrapped up in friends who will not obey the truth, God says, "Remember Lot's wife."

"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense." Jer. 51:6. "My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord." Jer. 51:45. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his fore-

head, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Rev. 14: 8-11. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." Rev. 18: 1-5, 8.

All this is present truth. One angel in these texts stands for the entire ministry of the time. These flying messengers are God's holy ministers in these last days, who are trumpeting to all nations the solemn warnings from heaven. This is a time of the Lord's vengeance against

all false religions of earth. He has set his hand to gather out his people, and to prepare his church, so that she may be presented holy, without spot or wrinkle, when he comes. This is not our word and work, but a *voice from heaven* says in solemn tones of warning, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul." "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." "If any man worship the beast [popery] and his image [Protestantism], the same shall be tormented forever and ever." Thousands have already heard that voice and obeyed. Halleluiah! Every child of God will be gathered out before Jesus comes. Thousands of others, however, who seemed to be pillars, have heard that voice but would not obey. The result is, God has had to sacrifice them in order to get a pure church. They chose to cling with the ruins of Babylon rather than to be identified with the holy remnant. All such have received of her plagues — "*death,* mourning, famine." By not obeying the truth, such lose all spiritual life, are cut off from union with God, and help to compose the dead carcass of fallen sectism. Beloved friend, this work is of God. To oppose

it is to throw open your soul to deceptive spirits and to drift into the very state and condition above described.

As before stated, after the children of Israel forsook literal Babylon, it underwent many great wars and ravages and finally became a sort of zoological garden, a habitation of all kinds of birds and beasts. The following scriptures describe its condition: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged." Isa. 13:19-22. "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant." Jer. 51:37.

All this was a type. That very condition of literal Babylon is the condition of spiritual Babylon today, since God is delivering his people out of her. Just as that ancient city fell and became a dwelling-place of dragons, doleful creatures, etc.; so sect-Babylon "the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. 18:2). Sectarians may consider this strong, but it is the eternal truth; and present facts, as seen by the pure in heart, prove that the above is a perfect picture of the great babel of sectism. All who cling to their false religions and refuse to forsake their sinful sects are slain and cut off by the Word of God and compose this great spiritual carcass preyed upon by evil spirits. Thousands who in the past were bright lights, when they hear the voice from heaven to come out of her, close their ears to the truth and go into darkness. These are cut off and slain. Oh, what a slaughter is now going on! This awful work has been foretold by the prophets of old.

"For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he

hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood." Verses 2, 3. "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many." Isa. 66: 15, 16. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." Jer. 48: 10. "Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them." Jer. 5: 14. "Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. They have made it desolate, and being desolate it mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart. The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness: for the sword

of the Lord shall devour from the one end of the land, even to the other end of the land: no flesh shall have peace." Jer. 12:10-12.

What an awful picture, yet how true! The sword of the Lord which smites the nations and devours from one end of the land to the other, and which is said to be filled with blood, is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). God's holy messengers are blowing the trumpet in Zion, and this calls together the elect from the four winds—Babylon confusion (Joel 2:1; Matt. 24:30-33; Zech. 2:6, 7). All who refuse to be gathered are slain by the sword of the Lord. Those slain are said to be "many." This great slaughter is also called a "sacrifice," because many of them possessed noble attributes and were even mighty through God; but when the whole truth was presented, they would not get saved from the last spot of sin and sectism; therefore God had to sacrifice them to evil spirits in order to get a pure church. The rams, lambs, bullocks, etc., show that the parties were, in the main, offerings to God on the altar of his grace. The thousands thus being slain compose a carcass — a dead putrefying mess of fallen religionists. Thus

saith the Lord: "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Matt. 24:28.

This no doubt reached a fulfilment at the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews composed the carcass; the Roman hosts, the eagles that gathered together to consume the carcass. This looks very probable, since the eagles were the very standards of the army which did desolate the city. But it is clear to our mind that the text has a twofold signification, and that it was to reach its true fulfilment just prior to the end, as it is used in such close connection with the coming of the Son of man. The word "eagles" is more correctly rendered "vultures" in the New Version. The basis of the language is a dead, putrefying body, the scent of which attracts the vultures and other birds, and beasts of prey. The lesson or application of this figure is highly spiritual.

"And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away." Jer. 7:33. "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee

unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured." Ezek. 39: 4. "And thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God: Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 39: 17-20.

The stink which comes out of the carcasses (spiritual carcasses) of the thousands in Babylon who have been slain by the sword of truth attracts myriads of "delusive spirits." The condition of fallen sectism is surely a stench in the nostrils of God. It is offensive to every sanctified soul. These spiritual carcasses shall

be inhabited by "monsters," "fowls," etc. In them "devils have found for themselves a place of rest." This perfectly harmonizes with the description given in Rev. 18: 2. Different kinds of birds and foul spirits being grouped together in these texts carry our minds back to the ruins of ancient Babylon, which was a hold of all manner of birds and beasts, and which clearly typified the swarm of unclean and deceptive spirits which throng sectism today.

There is another solemn fact I wish to call the reader's attention to before leaving this point. This work gives us data to calculate our whereabouts on the stream of time. "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye. For so the Lord said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling-place like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and take away and cut down the branches. They shall be left together unto the fowls of the

mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." Isa. 18:3-6. This time has come. The ensign —Christ—is lifted up—a token for the people to gather unto him. The trumpet of truth is being blown. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Ah! a sign that the day of the Lord is nigh at hand. A clear heat is produced in the church, his dwelling-place. Judgment is executed, and a pruning-time has come. Sprigs and branches are cut off and taken away; namely, "every branch that beareth not fruit he taketh away" (John 15:2). These cut-off branches (dead professors) "shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth." This is the very work described in the many texts already cited. But when was it all to be accomplished? Just "afore the harvest"—just before the end. Reader, we are living in that very time.

The Evening Light.

In the history of the church the Christian era is divided into four distinct epochs: 1. The morning-light age—the primitive church in all her glory. 2. The papal age—the reign of night, or dark superstition, known as the Dark Ages. 3. The Protestant age, or the reign of sectism; the period when God's church was in a scattered condition—the "cloudy day." 4. The evening-light age, which restores primitive Christianity in all its beauty and glory, and presents to the world the redeemed church of God, gathered out of all confusion and sin into the one body and fold of Christ.

"It shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." Zech. 14:7. This refers to the evening of the gospel day. We are now living in that very period. It was foretold that in this evening of time all the clouds that have hung in the spiritual sky for centuries should pass away and that the church should come to the summit of Zion transplendent with the same brilliant light that adorned her in the morning of this dispensation. "At evening time, *it shall be light.*"

The evening light restores the whole truth. True holiness and unity inseparable and eternal principles, again adorn the church of God. A self-sacrificing ministry are heralding the pure gospel to the nations of earth. This epoch of the church will continue till Jesus comes. Tens of thousands have already been gathered out of sect-confusion, and are rejoicing in the heights of Zion. Thousands more have been saved from sin and vice, and are now happy in a Savior's love. The gifts of the Spirit are again manifest in the church, as in days of yore; and thousands have been healed of all manner of sicknesses and diseases. Blind eyes are being opened, the deaf are made to hear, the lame to walk, the dumb to speak; and the dead have been raised to life in answer to prayer. And we shall see greater manifestations of God's power, as we "follow on to know the Lord."

A Pure Church Restored.

Of the primitive church in its normal state, at the time when it was the ideal for all future ages, it is declared that "of the rest durst no man join himself to them" (Acts 5:13). "They were *all* filled with the Holy Ghost. . . . And *the multitude* of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. . . . And great grace was *upon them all.*" Acts 4:31-33. This was declared of the visible body of believers. They presented to the world a clean, separate, distinct church, or people. They were pure from sin and sinners. The spirit of discernment in the apostles, and the mighty power and glory of God that rested upon them, made it impossible for hypocrites and sinners to profess among them. "Of the rest *durst no man* join himself to them."

But step by step the church drifted from this high plane and soon the great apostasy came. Then the priests "put no difference between the holy and profane," "showed no difference between the unclean and the clean" (Ezek. 22:26). Thus a mixed condition came in. Espe-

cially has this been true during the Protestant era—saints and sinners, true believers and hypocrites, the humble and the proud, all classes and kinds have been yoked up together, and all labeled "Christians."

But, dear reader, better days have come. The prophet foretold a time when the people of God would "return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not" (Mal. 3:18). We are living in that time. We have returned to the primitive plane, and by the Word and Spirit of God we are able to discern between the righteous and the wicked. Sectarians cry, "You can't have a pure church; there must be mixture." Here is God's answer to them: "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." Jer. 15:19. God does not approve of a mixture of saints and "sinners in the congregation of the righteous" (Psa. 1:5). "So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." Joel 3:17. This is the church. The Lord calls it "my *holy* mountain." Under the metaphor of

Jerusalem, the redeemed church in the evening time "shall be holy"—so much so that "no strangers [sinners] shall pass through her any more."

May God raise up many thousand witnesses to go forth with the righteous indignation of Josiah and the thunderbolts of heaven's truth, and take away the high places of pride and idolatry, and abolish the abomination of sectism out of the hearts of the people. Amen.

Christ is today gathering his church out of all the sects back to Zion. They return on the highway of holiness; namely, he sanctifies and cleanses them from all sin and traditions, and thus prepares his church, so she may be presented to himself "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," a holy church without blemish. True holiness adorned the church in primitive days. Had she but retained this glorious truth and experience, this globe today would be girdled with a belt of light and salvation. But instead, an apostasy came. The light of truth was soon extinguished by dark clouds of superstition and of false doctrines. Holiness is really the mainspring of all gospel truth. To retrograde from it would be to throw

open the doors to every species of false doctrine and error.

It was in this manner that the way was paved for the great apostasy. At a very early date true holiness was lost sight of, and was hid from the general masses of the people. Had it ever been retained by the church, there would never have been an apostasy. Mark you! By retrograding from true holiness the church went into apostasy, and was defiled. By returning to the true standard of holiness the church is brought out of the apostasy, and cleansed. The fire of holiness and truth restores a pure church. The result is, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" As the judgments of truth are executed and the fire of holiness accompanies the same, sinners and hypocrites are surprised and made afraid to profess among us. None can dwell in this devouring fire, only those who walk righteously. "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Psa. 1:5. "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall

stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3:2-6. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Verse 17.

While Mal. 3:2, 3 was fulfilled when Christ came in his personal advent to this world, yet the same work he then effected, he is now effecting in this evening time; namely, purifying

unto himself a holy church. These scriptures beautifully portray the present holiness work. Christ sits, a refining fire. He sits upon "the throne of his holiness." His throne is "like a fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire." This throne of grace and holiness is "within us." Thus he suddenly comes to his temple. "Ye are the temple of the living God: as God hath said, I will dwell in them." He purges and purifies his church; even as gold and silver, our hearts are purified by faith. The result of this cleansing is realized by the people of God offering unto the Lord "an offering in righteousness." Such offerings are "pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years [apostolic times]."

Glory to God! we have reached its fulfilment. Since he is dwelling in his church thus cleansed, he executes judgment against all sin and corrupt religions, and is a swift witness against men who would dare to profess among us and be guilty of the things enumerated in verse 5. Thus sinners can not stand in the congregation of the righteous. As we return to the apostolic plane, we are enabled to "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that

serveth God and him that serveth him not." Thus "the righteous are taken from among the vile"—a pure church is gathered and cleansed; and of them he says, "They shall be mine, when I make up my jewels."

We cooperate with Christ in this great work. What his Word accepts we accept; what it rejects we reject. Thus the rebels are purged out from among us. "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Zech. 13:8, 9. That which cuts off two parts in all the land is the judgments written. God's ministers lay "judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." The whole truth which they preach is "sharper than a two-edged sword" and cuts off all who will not obey. The third part left is the remnant who walk in the light and obey the whole truth. These are refined by the fire.

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and

tried." "Many must be tested [chosen out—Greek], and thoroughly whitened, and tried with fire, and sanctified." Dan. 12:10, Septuagint. Here we see that at the end of the apostasy there was to be a great holiness reformation. This is the very work that is now cleansing and purifying the sanctuary, or church. This same cleansing and redeeming of the church is seen in the first chapter of Isaiah. We will give it as rendered in the LXX:

"How has the faithful city Sion, once full of judgment, become a harlot! wherein righteousness lodged, but now murderers. Your silver is worthless, thy wine-merchants mix the wine with water. Thy princes are rebellious, companions of thieves, loving bribes, seeking after rewards; not pleading for orphans, and not heeding the cause of widows. Therefore thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, Woe to the mighty men of Israel; for my wrath shall not cease against mine adversaries, and I will execute judgment on mine enemies. And I will bring my hand upon thee, and purge thee completely, and I will destroy the rebellious, and will take away from thee all transgressors. And I will establish thy judges as before, and thy counsel-

ors as at the beginning: and afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful mother-city Sion. For her captives shall be saved with judgment, and with mercy." Isa. 1: 21-27.

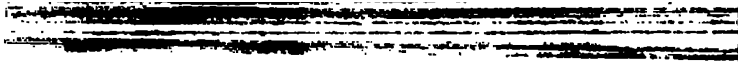
The faithful city Sion, once full of judgment, wherein righteousness lodged, refers to the pure church of God in her pristine glory. "She became a harlot." This refers to her apostatized condition. "Her merchants" refers to her ministers. It is said that "they mix the wine with water"; that is, they weaken the gospel and do not deal it out in its full strength. Oh, how truly is this fulfilled in Babylon! The pure unadultered truth is not heard there. Their ministers fear to preach it. They weaken it to suit their own theories and the crooked lives of their members. They "seek after rewards"—preach for the people's money, rather than to benefit souls—a hireling ministry.

But, thank God, this was not always to continue. God declares that he will execute judgment upon all such. "And I will bring my hand upon thee [his people, his church] and purge thee completely, and I will destroy the rebellious, and will take away from thee all trans-

gressors." This very work is now going on, and is restoring a pure church. "And I will establish thy judges as before"; namely, establish his people and ministry in holiness (1 Thess. 3:13), where they shall be full of judgment by the Spirit of the Lord, "to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and unto Israel his sin" (Micah 3:8). "And thy counselors as at the beginning [apostolic days]." "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness." "And afterwards thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful mother-city Sion." This represents the glory of the church after being purified and cleansed in this evening time.

This same truth is brought out in other texts. We will here give Isa. 4:3-5: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of

mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense." Zion and Jerusalem are metaphors, which signify the church. Here it is seen that after she is purged by the spirit of judgment and burning, the Word and Spirit, all that remain shall be called holy, and "upon all the glory shall be a defense"; namely, "the glory that thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one as we are." Thank God for a redeemed church.



A World-wide Movement.

Christianity is the only religion adapted to become directly catholic. It will apply universally to all men of all nations irrespective of political differences, customs, manners, and dress.

That Christianity will spread over all the world before the end comes is clearly taught in the Bible. To Abraham, God confirmed with an oath the following promise, and repeated the same to Isaac and Jacob: "In thy seed shall all the nations of earth be blessed." Gen. 22:18. "And in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore." Verse 17. This last promise reached a literal fulfilment during the law dispensation in Israel after the flesh. They multiplied until they became a numerous seed—a great nation. But its real and principal fulfilment was to take place under the gospel. Paul makes this clear in his Galatian letter: "They which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham. And the scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, say-

ing, In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Gal. 3:7, 8. "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." Verse 14. "And to thy seed, which is Christ." Verse 16. This makes clear that through Jesus Christ all the nations of earth are to be blessed, and that the heathen thus converted and blessed shall be numbered like the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea-shore. As surely as God has spoken, this must fully come to pass, for it is confirmed with the oath of the Almighty. And from Paul's language it is clear that the multitude saved from the Gentile nations of earth during the entire Christian dispensation is the fulfilment of the promise.

"I have set thee [Christ] to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Acts 13:47. Yes, "all ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." Psa. 22:27. "The heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Psa. 2:8. "He shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea

to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." Zech. 9:10. "My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 1:11. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Hab. 2:14. "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." Isa. 60:5. "The glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream." Isa. 66:12. "The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth." Jer. 16:19. "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Luke 2:10. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24:47. "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. Hence the urgent command, "Go ye

therefore and teach all nations." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

I have quoted at considerable length, and yet many more like texts could be given to show that Christianity must become universal. The saving gospel will reach every nation and people of earth. It shall penetrate the uttermost parts of the earth and reach all people. Before the end it not only will be preached as a witness to all nations, but will carry with it salvation to every part of the earth. "The abundance of the seas," that is, people from all the ends of the world, shall be converted and turn to the Lord; thus all nations will be blessed. In every place men shall offer sacrifice and praise to God, and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Thus Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. His spiritual dominion shall reach "from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." The pure church and kingdom is destined to become a great mountain and "fill the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34); that is, it will be

universal "under the whole heaven" (Dan. 7: 27).

Since truth is eternal and the Word of God can not be broken, all the above scriptures will and must reach a fulfilment. According to Matt. 24: 14, they will reach their fulfilment during the current dispensation. Many latter-day teachers place the fulfilment of these great promises in a supposed millennial age to follow the present dispensation, but such is all human invention. The gospel age is the last. This dispensation will close with the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the great day of judgment, at which time the righteous will be rewarded in heaven, the wicked punished in hell, and "the earth and the works therein shall be burned up."

We are now living in what is preeminently the day of salvation for all the world. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." It is in the age ushered in by Christ's first advent when he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and to the ends of the earth (see Zech. 9: 9, 10; Isa. 11: 9, 10; and Psa. 2: 7, 8). The earth can not perish until every continent, island, and people is illu-

minated with the light of the gospel. There must be a universal spread of the truth on the inhabitable globe.

As before stated, this great work began in the ministry of Jesus, was carried forward under the labors of the apostles and the early ministry, and has been more or less progressive throughout all ages. It is, however, a fact that as yet the foregoing scriptures have had but a limited and partial fulfilment.

In the morning-light age of the church the gospel reached but little beyond the limits of the Roman empire. It was confined to the few countries clustering around the Mediterranean Sea. Paul went as far as Spain. A few churches were planted along the northern coast of Africa. Churches flourished in Egypt, Palestine, and a small portion of Asia. In Europe it was confined to territory along the northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The entire territory over which the gospel spread in those primitive times would cover only about half the area of the United Sates of America. Before the great apostasy came, the entire territory covered by the gospel was very small compared with the area of the entire world. To say, then, that

the morning-light age of the church comprised the reaping of the entire harvest of the Gentile, or heathen, world is indeed folly. If so, then but a small patch of the great harvest-field—about one-twentieth—was reaped, for "the field is the world"—not merely the few countries around the Mediterranean Sea, but *the world.* In the light of these positive facts, the limit of the spread of the gospel in apostolic days proves beyond question that the great promises set forth in the many texts already quoted did not reach their complete fulfilment then.

The church of Rome spread out farther. But this was apostate Christianity, and the pure gospel was not preached. The Sixteenth Century Reformation was confined to a few European states, while the Wesleyan Reformation spread over only Great Britain and a few American colonies. Protestantism has been imbued with a missionary spirit, and considerable work has been accomplished by the faithful self-sacrificing saints therein. We would not for a moment reflect upon the work accomplished by these faithful men and women, but after more than three hundred years of mis-

sionary effort by Protestantism the world yet remains enshrouded in heathen darkness. Today more than a billion people are antichristian. It is estimated that about eight hundred millions remain in heathen darkness. It follows conclusively, then, that the universal spread of the gospel, the final triumph of Christianity in all the world, returning to the Lord of people from all the ends of the earth, has not yet been fully realized.

But let us get at the real truth. In all the dealings of God with man there has been a plan, and he in his own good time has worked out that plan. Let us consider why the gospel did not and in fact could not reach the ends of the earth universally in the morning-light age of the church.

First, the limited knowledge of the earth's area. At the time of Christ's first advent and the introduction of Christianity, it was generally understood that the Roman empire covered bout all the earth (see Luke 2:1). The Mediterranean Sea was the largest body of water really known on the globe. Around its shores clustered the provinces of the whole then-known world. The Atlantic Ocean was mostly an un-

explored sea, as was also the Pacific. The Indian Ocean had but a shadowy and almost fabulous existence. In fact, the whole world, with its teeming millions, that lay outside of the limits of the Roman empire was unexplored and unknown. The maps at that time showed the Great Sea—the Mediterranean—to be the center and the countries surrounding it the limits. This explains how the Queen of Sheba came from "the uttermost parts of the earth" to see the wisdom of Solomon. She came but a little distance as we measure the earth now. In this instance Jesus accommodated his language to his hearers' limited knowledge and understanding. It seems that Paul did likewise when the gospel reached the limits of the Roman empire. It was said that it sounded out "in all the earth" and "was preached to every creature under heaven." This shows how limited was their knowledge and understanding of the extent of the earth's area. What to them seemed like all the earth was in reality not a twentieth part of the whole world.

Second, the poor means of conveyance. The ministry of Jesus was confined to a small territory a few hundred miles in circumference.

The most northern point reached by him was Cæsarea Philippi, a city only one hundred and twenty miles north of Jerusalem. But we must take into consideration the fact that most of his traveling was done on foot, possibly some along the seacoasts in sailboats. He and his disciples walked from place to place, from city to city. He sent the Seventy before him two by two. There were no railroads, no electric lines, no steamships, no flying machines, no telegraph wires, no telephones, no wireless telegraphy, no printing-presses—in fact, none of our modern rapid means of conveyance or of transmitting messages. Their only means of carrying messages was on foot or by donkey and camel. Paul, who traveled more extensively than any other of the early ministers, went mostly on foot. His travel on water was by sailboats, which were very slow and tedious. By modern methods, the entire ground traveled by the apostle during his thirty-two years' ministry could be covered in a very few weeks. Taking all this into consideration, we see that the self-sacrificing primitive ministry did remarkably well to carry the gospel truth even to the Roman world and a few places in regions beyond.

The ministry of Jesus was one of constant labor and sacrifice. His was a busy life. When Jesus sent forth his disciples with the message of salvation, he told them that their message was so urgent they should salute no man by the way. Salutations is those Eastern countries were very tedious and would have required much of their time. "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "And ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel until the Son of man have come." This is more properly rendered, "till the Son of man overtake you." That is, he sent them forth to introduce the gospel of the kingdom in the different cities in which he himself would preach, and he gave them to understand that they would not reach all the cities of Israel until he would overtake them.

But times have changed. The globe has been circumnavigated. The great waters of the Atlantic and Pacific and Indian Oceans have been crossed and recrossed. The Arctic and Antarctic Oceans have been penetrated by modern sea-vessels. Probably every navigable country on earth and every island of the sea has been explored. The great and mighty nations of earth, then entirely unknown to civilization,

have been penetrated by modern civilization. Such great nations and countries as China, India, Japan, and Africa, which have never been reached by Christianity, except in a very limited way, but as a whole remain wrapped and bound in pagan darkness, are today opening their doors to the gospel and with outstretched arms are calling for salvation from sin.

The evening light is breaking. Surely God rules in the kingdoms of men, and thus through modern improvement and invention the way has been prepared for the evangelizing of the world. All this, with famine, pestilences, and wars, have plowed furrows for gospel seed into the darkest corners of the earth. Today instead of the slow foot-travel of primitive times, we have a modern railroad system with its lightning express-trains operating throughout the land. We have a network of electric lines operating in every direction. Great steamships plow across the seas in a few short days. Already airships are safely carrying passengers from one point to another. Thus messengers of God can "run to and fro" in the earth with almost lightning rapidity and also fly in the midst of heaven, "having the everlasting gos-

pel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6).

The modern printing-press is being utilized by God to turn out volumes of truth and send them broadcast to every nation like leaves from the tree of life. Messages can be sent around the world in a few hours by telegraph and telephone. The North Pole is said to have been recently discovered, and an expedition is now on its way toward the South Pole. It looks as if every corner of the earth would be reached. We stand in awe and wonderment, yea, in holy awe and reverence, as we behold the guiding and directing hand of God. It is the great day of preparation. It certainly looks as if these modern inventions would be used of God in bringing about his glorious purpose and in carrying out his plan in the world's evangelization.

The evening-light reformation is, we believe, the one designed of God to fulfil the great spiritual work thus to be accomplished. "It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light. And it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them

toward the western sea; in summer and in winter shall it be. And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall Jehovah be one and his name one." Zech. 14: 7-9, A. R. V.

The evening light reveals the corruption of sect-Babylon, calls out the people of God scattered in the various folds, and restores a pure church—the church of God in all its primitive glory and power. This has largely been the work of the reformation thus far. The pure church thus gathered and redeemed is in prophecy metaphorically termed Jerusalem. Many have thought that the restoration of Zion—the church—to its primitive glory is all that is to be accomplished in the blessed evening light, and that when this is fully accomplished, the Lord will immediately come; but, dear reader, you will observe that after the restoration of the pure church—Jerusalem—then shall living waters go out of her toward the eastern and the western sea. These living waters are the streams of gospel truth and salvation that shall flow out to all the world. These flow out from Jerusalem—the pure church of God. They are destined to cover the earth with the knowledge of God till all nations shall be blessed thereby, and

people from all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord. Thank God for this blessed day!

Jehovah shall be king over *all the earth* in the evening of time. The spiritual domain of Christ shall reach from sea to sea, even to the ends of the earth. Present facts, we believe, bear this out. The reformation thus far has been principally directed in restoring the whole truth—full salvation from sin through holiness, divine healing, gifts of the Spirit, and unity of the Spirit in the one church of God. Sect-Babylon has been exposed as a false and corrupt system, and a voice from heaven has been calling out of her the people of God. The result is, thousands of sinners have been saved from sin into the one fold of Christ and thousands of others have been gathered out of sectism. All these together constitute the Zion of God, the redeemed church in the blessed evening light. Others are still coming from sin and sectism to the heights of Zion, to the mount of holiness.

But a missionary spirit is now taking hold of the church. Instead of thinking that the day of judgment is but a step before us, the church is being inspired with a spirit of evangelizing the

world before Christ comes again. Though the great truth of Christ's second coming and the near approach of the end of the world is made prominent in our teaching, we believe that all signs point to the impending judgments soon to break in upon this degenerate world, yet a special effort is being made to spread the saving truth of the gospel to all people before Jesus comes, and we believe that it is the hand of God moving in the order of his plan. Already self-sacrificing missionaries are going to the different nations of earth, missions are being established in foreign lands, missionary homes are being built in many of our cities for the training of workers to invade heathen lands, pure literature by the ton is being sent to almost every corner of the earth. All this is preparing the way for the stupendous work before us. In fact, the reformation thus far has been but a preparation for the great work soon to be accomplished. The whole church on earth is being inspired of God for world-wide missionary work. It is certainly God's time, his plan, and his leading. He had prepared for this. Everything in the world seems to point to this spreading of the gospel over all the earth.

In Rev. 14: 6-10 we have the three great messages of the reformation of the evening time. Included in these is, "The everlasting gospel shall be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." A careful study of the seventh chapter of Daniel will show that after the reign of the "little horn" and the consumption of apostate religion by the burning judgments of truth restored in the pure church in this evening time, "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7: 27). This certainly teaches the spread of the gospel to all nations in the last days. We trust that erelong the vessels that plow the seas will carry hundreds of blood-washed saints with the message of salvation to all people.

"The watch-fires kindle far and near;
In every land let them appear,
Till burning lights of gospel fire
Shall gird the world and mount up higher."

"We will gird the globe with salvation,
With holiness unto the Lord,
Until light shall illumine every nation,
The light from the lamp of his Word."

This is the time when the gospel shall reach all nations and many of the heathen shall be saved.

Before closing this chapter I wish to consider a few points that to the minds of some may seem like a contradiction of the truths contained in this chapter and in the one following. First, the fact that we are living in the time when the whole world shall hear the gospel and Christianity shall become universal, does not prove that all men will be saved. At the very time when Christianity spread over the Roman empire and supplanted paganism, and hundreds of thousands were saved through the gospel, wickedness and sin continued on every side. So in the last days not all men will be saved, but "evil men will wax worse and worse." Daniel gives us a picture of the world at the time of the end: "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Dan. 12: 9, 10. So let it be understood that when the Bible says that people from all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord as a result of the pure gospel's being preached to all nations,

it does not mean that the majority will be saved, but it simply teaches that "many" of all nations will turn to Christ and be saved; that is, wherever the saving gospel is carried, some will be saved, though few compared with those who will be lost.

There are a number of texts that teach a state of wickedness at the revelation of Christ from heaven. Matt. 24:11, 12, is generally applied to the time immediately before Christ's coming. A careful reading of the texts and contexts, however, show that the great apostasy, the reign of false prophets, and the deception of the Christian era are foretold. Following this the blessed gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all nations (verse 14). 2 Thess. 2:2-12 has largely reached its fulfilment during the Catholic age, although this power is said to continue until destroyed by the brightness of his coming. 2 Tim. 3:1-5 and 1 Tim. 4:1-3 are certainly fulfilled in apostate Christianity and apply there, although it is a fact that this deplorable state of things still continues, men being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, and having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Careful study of

these few scriptures, however, shows that out of this state of things God gathers his people —separates them as wheat is separated from the chaff. From all this maze of confusion and dead formality God is now separating his clean, pure bride—the church—and at the second coming of Christ these empty professors will constitute no part of Christ's church. The fact that a general reign of deception and formalism will continue in apostate Christianity right up to the end, in no wise conflicts with the truth of the world's evangelization through the instrumentality of the pure church of God. These texts describe only the condition of the professed Christian world in the last days, and at the very time God separates from this mass of professors his own pure and chosen bride.

It may be objected that his coming will be as a thief and a snare (Luke 21:34, 35; 1 Thess. 5:1-5); but this will be true only of those who are unsaved; of the many scoffers and worldly-minded, whose hearts are waxed gross through drunkenness, surfeiting, and the cares of life; of those throughout the earth who live in sin, fail to make preparation, but in carnal security cry, "Peace and safety." To all such the com-

ing of Christ will be like a snare; but the multitude of the saved—the church—will be "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God" (2 Pet. 3:12). They are children of the light and children of the day, and that day will not overtake them as a thief (1 Thess. 5:4-6). The five foolish virgins represent all those who will not be ready, and the five wise ones represent those who are saved. To the former Christ's coming will be unexpected; to the latter it will be welcome, for they are ready. "Even so come, Lord Jesus."

In Luke 17:26-30 Jesus likens his coming to the flood and to the destruction of Sodom. I question whether the Lord here intended to teach that the same proportion of wickedness that was characteristic of the antediluvian world and of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah would be prevalent in the earth at his coming. If he here intended to teach that no more proportionately would be saved at his second coming than were saved at the time of the flood—"eight souls"—or at the destruction of Sodom—three souls—then we may well despair the evangelization of the earth. But such an interpretation of Christ's words would place them in direct

contradiction to all the many plain scriptures that teach exactly the reverse, as seen in this and in the following chapter.

A careful reading of Luke 17: 26-30 and Matt. 24: 36-39 shows that Christ neither mentioned the proportion of people to be saved nor spoke of the awful sins of Sodom and then compare them to the wickednes of earth at the time of his coming. The thought is, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man." When the deluge burst upon the earth, the people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, planting and building, and they "knew not until the flood came and took them all away." The same was true regarding the destruction of Sodom—"they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded," until the day God rained fire from heaven. They knew not the time. In these texts Christ says nothing about only a few being saved, but he shows that business enterprises and the common routine of daily cares and responsibilities will occupy the minds of the people right up to the hour of judgment. The reason for this he states thus: "No man knoweth the day and hour when the Son of man cometh." Hence this gives weight to Christ's

solem charge, "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour the Lord doth come." He also said, "For in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Again, it is said that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads to life," and that "few there be that find it." Yes, this has always been and it ever will be true, but this does not contradict the many scriptures that teach the reaping of the harvest of the nations of earth. During the history of Christianity the harvest of some nations has been reaped. In the first centuries a great harvest of souls was gathered into the garner of the Lord from the Roman empire. Thousands upon thousands were saved, and yet thousands remained in sin. During the Reformation of the sixteenth century a great harvest was gathered in European countries. The Wesleyan Reformation reaped a great harvest throughout the British Isles and in many colonies in America; and for a long time America has been a great harvest-field. But we affirm, and facts bear out the assertion, that such great countries as China, India, Japan, and Africa, and many islands of the sea, with their teeming millions of poor be-

nighted souls in heathen darkness, have never been harvested. The gospel will surely reach these nations, and their harvest is approaching. But even if multitudes of the heathen in these countries, "the abundance of the sea," should yet be saved, the host would be few compared to the millions lost. Taking the Christian era as a whole, the percentage saved compared to the millions lost will be small and the number few.

The Saints Will Have Universal Dominion.

The final triumph of Christianity over all other religions and faiths is assured in the Word of God. In Daniel 2 we read of a "stone cut out without hands." This refers chiefly to the church or kingdom of God—Christianity. It did not come by human hands. Being divine, it came from heaven. It is of a spiritual nature; hence no worldly policy, human doctrine, nor military force was employed in its establishment. 'Not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.' This stone smote the image and broke it to pieces. As observed in a previous chapter, the great image represented four heathen kingdoms that reigned in succession in ancient times. These were the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. It was the Roman which held the dominion when Christ appeared to set up the everlasting kingdom of heaven.

At the time when this heathen government, partaking of all the characteristics of the preceding empire, was at its zenith of imperial splendor, military glory, legislative authority, and literary eminence, Christianity smote it at

its very foundation, or principles of support, and by destroying these brought the whole to ruin. This stone began to smite the image when the apostles went out into every part of the Roman empire, pulling down idolatry and founding Christian churches. Soon the saving gospel spread to every quarter. Pagans were converted by the thousands. In A. D. 331, by an edict of the emperor himself, all the heathen temples were ordered destroyed, and Christianity became the religion of the empire. In the very territory where paganism held full sway during the dominion of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires, Christianity was now the universal religion. You see that many of the distinguishing marks and principles of all the preceding empires remained in, and were compacted with, the Roman government, not only as to their territorial possession, but also as to their distinctive characteristics. Thus when Christianity struck at the roots of pagan Rome, not only the iron and clay, but also the brass, the silver, and the gold, representing the former pagan systems and governments, "were broken to pieces together." Christianity triumphed, and the pagan systems fell.

But mark well the fact that at the very time when Christianity crushed the image and broke it in pieces, it was only "a stone." That was the blessed morning-light age of the church. Christianity at this time was represented by a stone, and yet that stone filled the Roman empire, or the then-known world; but it was foreseen that this stone which smote the image became a "great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:34). This shows that the work of Christianity was to be progressive. Beginning small, it was to continue to enlarge and expand. Not only would the Roman empire and a few countries clustering around the Mediterranean Sea be brought under the influence of the gospel, but the kingdom—the church of Christ—would enlarge from a stone into a mountain, yea, "*a great mountain,* and *fill the the whole earth.*" Wherever it goes, it breaks in pieces, consumes, and destroys idolatry out of the hearts of man.

What was done in the morning-light age of the church throughout the Roman empire is what will be accomplished in the evening light throughout the whole earth. No law or principle in Christianity is directed against the po-

litical code of any country, but against the sin and idolatry therein. False religions and corrupt systems of so-called Christianity must give way to pure Christianity revealed in the whole gospel now being preached. That which in primitive times spread out and filled the Roman empire shall in these last days spread from sea to sea and fill the whole earth with its influence. By this I mean that those countries which have not as yet felt the powerful influence of Christianity will yet feel it; for "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Since the pure and redeemed church of God in this evening time is destined to spread over all the earth, it follows that God's saints will have the dominion. Not that the temporal governments will be given into their hands, for the reign and kingdom of God is "not of this world." It is of a spiritual nature. The idea is that in the very nations where paganism and apostate Christianity rule and govern, there pure Christianity will yet wield a mighty influence; and since this triumphant reign is the enjoyment of the saints, who will be distributed in every corner of the earth, theirs is a univer-

sal dominion. "He that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces." Rev. 2:26, 27. The reign of Christ is a spiritual reign, and his kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. He reigns in the hearts of his people.

But his dominion shall be to the ends of the earth. "The uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession"; that is, his truth and kingdom will spread to the uttermost parts of the earth and through its conquering influence will affect every nation. Thus Christianity will become the universal religion of earth. All other religions are of a local nature and apply only to certain nations and peoples, but pure Christianity will apply to all nations, and the prophet said that "all nations shall flow into it." The universality of Christianity in the earth at the time when Christ comes again, its final and glorious triumph, is clearly seen in many scriptures.

Turning to the seventh chapter of Daniel, we find the same four heathen monarchies—Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman—

brought to view under the symbols of four beasts (verses 2, 8, and 17). Following their reign, the saints of the Most High were, it is said, to "take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever" (verse 18). Unlike the heathen kingdoms that preceded it, the kingdom of grace and righteousness possessed by the saints was to continue forever. All these governments, being imperfect in their nature, contained in them the seeds of their own destruction. Kings die; ministers change; subjects pass away; new relations arise; new measures and new projects are originated; and these produce political changes and often political ruin. All former empires have changed, and the very names of the peoples have changed with them. The Assyrians were lost in the Chaldeans and the Babylonians; the Babylonians were lost in the Medes; the Medes in the Persians; the Persians in the Greeks; and the Greeks in the Syrians and Egyptians; these in the Romans; and the Romans in the Goths and a variety of other nations. Nor do the names of those ancient governments or the people who lived under them remain on the face of the earth at the present day. They are found

only on the pages of history. Even every dispensation of God prior to Christianity opposed another by which it was to be succeeded. But every principle of Christianity is eternal—the everlasting gospel, the eternal Spirit, the eternal God, the eternal Christ, his everlasting love, everlasting joy, everlasting righteousness, and everlasting peace. All these constitute the everlasting kingdom of grace; and since the saints possess these elements in their hearts, theirs is an everlasting reign, an everlasting possession.

Following the setting up of the everlasting kingdom, came the reign of the little horn and great apostasy (verses 19-21; 24, 25). During this long period the saints were martyred by the millions. This power prevailed against them. This was to continue until judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and this judgment executed was to take away the dominion of the horn, to "consume and destroy it to the end" (verse 25). This began with the Reformation of Protestantism and reaches its grand climax in the evening light. The consuming here spoken of evidently refers to the executing of the flaming judgments of truth against false worship and false systems of religion. The fire

of salvation and holiness has a consuming effect upon corrupt systems of religion. For example, the preaching of Luther and other reformers in the sixteenth century could well be illustrated as setting fire to the whole system of papal religion. "I will make my word in thy mouth fire and this people wood, and it shall devour them." Of course, we are not to understand this literally, but such figuratively was the effect of the preaching during the Reformation. The power and dominion of Rome was largely taken away, and honest souls held within her deceptive fold were led out into clear light. And so in this evening time, as the judgments of truth that were executed in the clear morning of the Christian era are restored to the church, and the saved execute these against every false system of religion and even against false worshipers, the effect is the same upon these as the preaching of the reformers was upon Rome. And as honest souls accept the preaching of the pure gospel, they will be led to renounce the false and corrupt systems in which they have been held and come out into clear light.

This consuming and destructive work against

false religions has been going on for some time, and the whole realm of sectism has to some extent felt its withering effect; but I am sure that in a deeper and broader sense will the whole realm of apostate religion be made to feel the burning effects of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only will apostate Christianity be made to feel this, but as the pure gospel goes to all nations, false religions of every kind will be affected by it; and as people renounce these and accept Christianity, in this sense the dominion of false religions will be taken away. This blessed work will continue "until the end."

We have reached the evening light—the restoration of the whole truth, and in this is comprehended full salvation from all sin and false religion, a pure church restored and an enjoyment of all the rich blessings of the kingdom of Christ. "And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Verse 22. Thank God! we have reached that time. In the morning-light age the kingdom of God, as we have seen, spread over the entire Roman empire and Christianity conquered paganism therein. That was the then-known world. But after the great apostasy, when we reach the evening-light age

of the church and the saints again possess the kingdom, "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" (verse 27). Yes, "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." Verse 14. That is, in all the earth in all nations where the gospel is destined to go, there will be found disciples of Jesus offering praise and honor and glory to his matchless name. Here, then, we have the glorious triumph of Christianity set forth. It becomes universal. In this sense the church of God, the saints, the beloved city, shall have the dominion under the whole heaven. Christ will have true disciples among all people, nations, and languages; and they shall serve him. This state of things shall continue until the end.

Gog and Magog; or, The Final Conflict.

The events in the closing years of this dispensation will be very similar to those in its beginning. History shall repeat itself. Back in the morning-light age of the church Christianity opposed every false religion. This was unavoidable, for in its very principles it stands opposed to every false way. As Christianity spread principally throughout the pagan Roman empire, its effects were mostly felt there. As will be the case in these last days, the pagan systems of religion went crashing to pieces before the onslaughts of Christianity. Back there this was confined to Rome, while in this evening time it will be universal, all over the world.

In Revelation 12, as fully considered in previous chapters, after Christianity cast down the dragon—paganism throughout the Roman empire—"he persecuted the woman"—church (verse 13). The dragon became "wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed" (verse 17). As the pagan systems were overthrown and Christianity spread throughout the entire Roman empire, the devotees of these false systems, seeing their

religions crumbling, became very wroth, and in order to stop the onward progress of the gospel they inaugurated a bitter persecution against the Christians, or church of God. The same will be true in these last days—only at this time all religions of earth will be united in the opposition.

With the restoration of the pure church of God and Christianity to its primitive glory, they stand opposed not only to the pagan systems but to every false and corrupt system of apostate Christianity. This includes the Catholic sect and all Protestant sects. As the devotees of all these false systems see their religions crumbling, they will do just what the pagans did throughout the Roman empire in the beginning: they will unite in a general opposition against the pure church of God. The shattered remnants of all these counterfeit religions will unite in confederation.

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world,

to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Rev. 16:13, 14. While the Lord is mustering his host upon the high plains of Armageddon (Rev. 16:16) in this beautiful evening light, the spirits of devils will gather together the conquered and defeated factions of all other religions in a general confederation and opposition to the burning truth of God and the true saints who stand in its defense. This is the last great spiritual conflict. The dragon here is Paganism, the beast is Romanism, and the false prophet is Protestantism. We have seen in a previous chapter that the second beast of Revelation 13 represents Protestantism. This second beast and what is elsewhere in symbol termed the "false prophet" are identical. (Compare Rev. 13:11-15 and Rev. 19:20.) Here, then, we have heathenism (the dragon), Popery (the beast), and Protestantism (the false prophet) all gathered together by spirits of devils in opposition to the true church of God.

We have seen that God is gathering his people out of all the maze of false religions, out of all Protestant sects as well as out of the Catholic sect. The church thus gathered out

now stands in square opposition to all sect-religions, and, thank God, it has victory over them. This victory of the church in the evening light is seen in the book of symbols as follows: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire [the pure Word and holiness of God]: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Rev. 15:2. My brethren, "we have reached an awful era in the onward sweep of time." The greatest victory that the church is ever to enjoy or win is here. She will conquer the nations, and rule them with a rod of iron. But this will also incur a tremendous opposition from the shattered remnants of all the defeated and fallen religions of earth, just before the end. There will be a confederation of all these, in a last attempt to turn back the onward-sweeping tide of Christianity. Observe that these spirits of devils gather the "whole world"; that is, not only Catholics, Protestants, and the devotees of the various pagan systems, but also Mohammedans and the adherents to every false system of earth.

It is evident that this will take place just be-

fore the end. When Christianity shall have spread over the entire world and every nation of earth shall have been affected by the blessed influence of the gospel; when the church of God shall have arisen in her power and glory, outshone every institution on earth, and become in reality "the light of *the world*"; when the saints shall have come into possession of the "dominion under the whole heaven," and every false religion have come under the consuming fire of eternal truth, then, as a last desperate effort, this confederation of all the false and corrupt systems of religion will prepare to crush the church of God. This they may attempt to do by one final stroke of bloody martyrdom. But before they can accomplish their purpose, the whole will end with the ushering in of "the great day of God Almighty." This is Christ's coming and judgment.

This same conflict is brought to view in Rev. 20:8, 9. Here the dragon-spirit goes out "to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle." The original signification of the terms "Gog" and "Magog" is difficult to ascertain, as all known accounts are

conflicting. The terms occur in Ezekiel 38 and 39 also. In Revelation 20 these terms are used metaphorically to signify all the enemies of the church of God and opposers of true Christianity.

It is a fact that at this very time, when the Lord, by his Spirit, is assembling his hosts for the grand, final, and universal advance against sin, idolatry, and false religions, the devil is already paving the way for the union of all false systems of religion on earth, when Christianity shall have triumphed. The World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 marked an important epoch in this latest shift infernal. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet met in "mutual confidence and respect," a "brotherhood" of religions. Theism, Judaism, Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Zoroastrianism, Catholicism, the Greek church, and Protestantism in many forms were all represented; and the delegates of all these religions met, as they said, "to unite all religions against all irreligion; to make the golden rule the basis of this union; and to present to the world *substantial unity of many religions.*" I will here

give extracts from addresses made before the Parliament.

President Charles Carroll Bonney said in the opening address: "Worshipers of God and lovers of men: Let us rejoice that we have lived to see this glorious day; . . . that we are permitted to take part in this solemn and majestic event of a World's Congress of Religions. The importance of this event can not be overestimated. Its influence on the future relations of the various races of men, can not be too highly esteemed. If this Congress shall faithfully execute its duties with which it has been charged, it shall become the joy of the whole earth, and stand in human history like a *new mount Zion,* crowned with glory, and marking the actual beginning of a *new epoch of brotherhood* and peace. *For when the religious faiths of the world recognize each other as brothers, children of one Father,* whom all profess to love and serve, then, and not till then, will the nations of the earth yield to the spirit of concord and learn war no more. We meet on the mountain height of absolute respect for the religious convictions of each other. . . . This day the sun of a new era of religious peace and progress

rises over the world, dispelling the dark cloud of sectarian strife. *It is a brotherhood of religions.*"

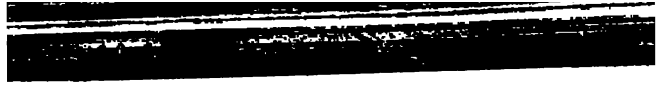
Chairman John Henry Barrows spoke thus in his address: "We are here not as Baptists and Buddhists, Catholics and Confucians, Parsees and Presbyterians, Methodists and Moslems; we are here as members of a Parliament of Religions, over which flies no sectarian flag, . . . but where for the first time in a large council is lifted up the banner of love, fellowship, brotherhood. . . . Welcome, one and all, thrice welcome to the world's first Parliament of Religions! Welcome to the men and women of Israel, the standing miracle of nations and religions! Welcome to the disciples of Prince Siddartha, the many millions who cherish their Lord Buddha as the light of Asia! Welcome to the high priests of the national religion of Japan! This city has every reason to be grateful to the enlightened ruler of 'the Sunrise Kingdom.' Welcome to the men of India, and all faiths! Welcome to all the disciples of Christ. . . . It seems to me that the spirits of just and good men hover over this assembly. I believe the spirit of Paul is here. I believe the spirit

of the wise and humane Buddha is here, and of Socrates the searcher after truth. . . . When a few days ago I met for the first time the delegates who have come to us from Japan, and shortly after the delegates who have come to us from India, I felt that the arms of human brotherhood had reached almost around the globe." —World's Parliament of Religions, chap. III.

Since this great Parliament of Religions there have been a number of such gatherings. This is but paving the way for the last great conflict. I have observed that, no matter how much the sects were quarreling among themselves, whenever we went into their midst with the whole gospel and God's people were gathered out, the sectarians suddenly became friendly toward each other and began to hold union meetings in opposition to the truth. If the corrupt and false religions of earth can never agree on anything else, they will, and are, agreeing, to oppose the true church of God and the truth advocated by it, which is destined to "consume them to the end." The devil is mustering his hosts—Pagan, Mohammedan, Catholic, and Protestant sects—in one "*grand brotherhood of religions*"—Gog and Magog.

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city." Rev. 20:9. The camp of the saints, the beloved city, is none other than the pure church of God gathered out of all false religions in these last days. Such is the very host that John saw on the sea of glass mingled with fire; and they had victory over all false religions (Rev. 15:2, 3). The hosts of hell, in order to compass the camp of the saints, "went up on the breadth of the earth." This signifies the universality of the church of God, or Christianity. It will be everywhere—all over the world. Therefore all false religions will unite in a confederation that will be universal, and the opposition to the church of God will be universal. In the midst of this final conflict fire will come down from heaven and destroy them (Rev. 20:9). This ushers in "the great day of God Almighty." "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruc-

tion from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, . . . in that day." 2 Thess. 1: 7-10.



The End of All False Religions and of Their Devotees.

We have seen that the final conflict between the pure church of God and all other religions of the world will end in the "great day of God Almighty." This will be ushered in by the coming of Christ in flaming fire from heaven, at which time all the wicked will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Rev. 20:10. "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." Rev. 17:8. "I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Dan. 7:11.

In Rev. 19:11-16 is a grand picture of the second coming of Christ. When he comes, he finds the beast and the allied armies gathered together to war against him and his army (verse 19). When all false religions of earth gather in opposition against the church of God, they are

fighting Christ and all heaven, for his church is one in heaven and on earth. Christ's second coming will clearly reveal this fact. He will appoint them all to the great slaughter (verses 17, 18).

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Rev. 19:20. "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone. . . . And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." Rev. 14:9-11. "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants

at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." Rev. 19: 1-3. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and *all the nations that forget God.*" Psa. 9: 17.

The foregoing texts clearly teach the eternal destiny of all beast worshipers and false religionists. The nations that forget God—mentioned in the last text—are the pagans who have not retained God in their knowledge. The beast in some of these texts refers to the entire apostate church, with all its adherents. In other texts the beast and false prophet are both referred to, for these cover every form of apostate and corrupt religion. All these, in the great day of judgment, will be cast into "perdition," "the burning flame," "the lake of fire and brimstone"; and in that awful place of punishment they will be "tormented forever and ever." This final destiny is termed "hell." So positively teaches the seven clear texts of Scripture at the head of this chapter, and the Word of God can not be broken.

Christianity, like an angel, a dove of purity, came from heaven, and is divine. Being from heaven, the church of God shall return there in the last day. But all other religions, whether

Pagan, Mohammedan, or apostate Christian, including all Catholic and Protestant sects and creeds, "ascended out of the bottomless pit" (Rev. 11:7; 17:8); that is, are of hellish origin. Therefore in the last day all these will go back to the place from which they emanated. In the day of judgment all beast worshipers and false religionists, the entire host of apostates, and all wicked men and devils will be cast into the lake of fire.*

*For a thorough work on the eternal destiny of the wicked see my book, "Man, His Present and Future," price 50c; or "Hell and Everlasting Punishment," price 10c. Both are sold by the publishers of this book.

The Eternal Home of the Church.

The church of God is from above. It is the holy Jerusalem which "came down from God out of heaven." Ages before it appeared upon earth, it was prepared in the plan of God, and hid in his infinite wisdom and knowledge. It cast its shadow upon earth in the form of the Jewish sanctuary. As there must be a substance to produce a shadow, the church already existed. When the fulness of time came, it came down to earth. Its builder, head, door, foundation, and governor came from heaven. Its law, the truth, "came by Jesus Christ." Its garments of salvation are from God. Its members are all born "from above." It is animated with "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." The conversation of all its members "is in heaven." Their names "are written in heaven." Their affections are "fixed on things above, not on things on the earth." This is the *heavenly Jerusalem.*

Being a spiritual, divine, and heavenly church, denominated "the kingdom of heaven," its affinities and attractions are all heavenward. "Set your affections on things above, not on things on

the earth." The mind and heart of the Christian is naturally reaching out into the eternal world. Earth loses its attraction. Its rubies and diamonds, its silver and gold, lose their luster and brilliancy, as the Christian, with an eye of faith sees his riches in heaven. He beholds the sparkling jewels, the unsearchable riches of Christ that await him over there. As he presses forward toward the joy set before him, earth's attractions fade away. None but the earthly-minded desire to remain here. None but those who are void of spiritual life, desire to make this their eternal home. Man is born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades; where the stars will be spread out before us like islands that slumber upon the ocean; and where the beautiful beings which here pass before us like visions will stay in our presence forever.

The patriarchs and saints of old "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). They understood that this was not their destiny, their final abode. David, who reigned over Israel and inherited the Promised Land, says, "I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were."

Psa. 39:12. They were strangers in the earth, even in the land which they received for an inheritance; only pilgrims sojourning here for a short time. Paul says they were seeking a country, "*a better country,* that is, a heavenly" (Heb. 11:14, 16).

Not only was this true of the Old-Testament saints, but Peter denominates the New-Testament church "as strangers and pilgrims," who are "sojourning here" (1 Pet. 2:11; 1:17). "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Heb. 13:14. "For he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:16. All these scriptures point us away from this earth to "another country" — yes, to a "better country," "an heavenly." We are only sojourners here. We are traveling to another clime, another sphere of existence, a brighter realm. Our short pilgrimage upon earth is compared to a handbreadth, an eagle hastening to his prey, a swift post, a dream, a shadow, a vapor. Time with gigantic footsteps is bearing us to eternity. Life is soon cut down, "and we fly away." "Because man goeth to his long home." Eccl. 12:5. "To his eternal home."—LXX.

That "eternal home" is not this earth, as the

worldly-minded vainly hope, but is "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1). Yes, in heaven, the place of God's throne and the home of the angels. There is an eternal heaven above, which Paul terms the "third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:2-4). First, the church is now raised up on the plane of heaven's purity, and all its members are made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Then again, the atmosphere which surrounds this earth is frequently in Scripture called "the heavens." These will pass away with this earth. But there is a third heaven, a place where God now dwells. "The Lord he is God in heaven above." Deut. 4:39. "The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven." Psa. 11:4. Heaven is also the home of the angels. "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Matt. 22:30. "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up in heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." Mark 16:19. "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." 1 Pet. 3:22. "For

Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but unto heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24.

All these texts, with many others, clearly teach that there is a place called heaven. There can be no appeal from this fact. When Stephen was dying, it is said that he "looked up steadfastly *into heaven,* and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, *I see the heavens opened,* and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." We shall now prove that this place will be the eternal home of the church.

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:18. Paul here speaks of things which are "temporal" (*proskaros*), for a season or time only; and then he speaks of things "eternal (*aionios*), without end, as the eternal Spirit (Heb. 9:14). Those things which we see with our natural eyes are only temporal. They are things which have a short duration, must have an end. "The things which are seen are tem-

poral"—temporary, existing for a time only. That includes this earth and all that pertains to it. All nature teaches this fact. The grass covers this earth with a beautiful and verdant carpet, but the time comes when it withers and molds away. The leaves which come forth and cheer our hearts in springtime turn to a golden hue when the autumn winds blow, fall to mother earth, and there decay. The sturdy oak, in whose branches the fowls of the air lodge, soon decays and is no more. The same lesson is taught in the animal kingdom. Our mortal bodies return to dust, to mother earth.

Everything around us teaches us "the end of all things" pertaining to earth. The earth itself is one of the things which we see, and Paul positively declares that all we see is temporal, must have an end. This earth will pass away. Both the Old and New Testaments teach this fact. "Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure." Psa. 102:25, 26. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a gar-

ment." Isa. 51:6. "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; . . . it shall fall, and not rise again." Isa. 24:19, 20. In these texts is foretold the "end of this world." This planet called the earth shall "wax old" and "shall perish." It shall be "clean dissolved," "and shall be removed like a cottage"; "it shall fall and not rise again." So positively teaches the Word of God. When we come over into the New Testament we have this same fact taught, if anything, more clearly than in the Old. Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth pass." Matt. 5:18. In the very commencement of his ministry, Jesus Christ teaches the instability of all visible things. The heavens which you see and which are so glorious, and the earth which you inhabit, *shall pass away;* "for the things which are seen *are temporal.*" From the lips of Jesus we hear the solemn words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." Matt. 24:35. "The end of all things is at hand." 1 Pet. 4:7. From the beginning God has meted out this world's career. One long age has succeeded another, until we

have reached the "last days" of its history. A small step before us is the end of "all things" pertaining to earth.

But when will all this take place? Answer: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20: 11-15. This is very clear. The coming of Christ upon the great white throne (the throne of his glory, Matt. 24: 31), the coming forth of all the dead from land and sea, all people being judged, and the wicked cast into the lake of fire—this will be the time when this earth will pass away

and "no place be found for it." Let all our readers prepare for the catastrophe; for as truly as God has spoken, it will come. The "heavens" in these texts refer to aerial heavens. We will next consider the manner of its passing away.

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . . But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that therein are shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Pet. 3:7-12. How clear this testimony! Not only will the works in this earth be consumed, but the earth itself "shall be burned up," "dissolved," and "melted with fervent heat." That day of fire which shall consume this earth, "the

day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," will be the day of the Lord's second advent (verses 4, 10). The "end of all things" does not mean a renovation of this earth; but an utter consuming, and melting of the same into the same chaotic state in which its matter existed before the six days of creation.

"The Scriptures very clearly teach that Christ will come in the end of the world, in the last day of this last age of time. They also inform us that the same will be the day of judgment. And here Peter tells us plainly that on that very day of his coming and the judgment, the heavens and the earth will be consumed, melted, and destroyed. So it will indeed be the end of the world, the close of all time allotted to this earth."

Since man will have an eternal existence, and as we see, this earth shall pass away and be no more, it can not be his eternal home. "The things which are not seen *are eternal.*" Our eternal home is something we can not now see. Where, then, is it located? The Word plainly answers: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made

with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. 5:1.

When time has run its course; when the sun and moon have ceased to shine; when all things pertaining to earth and the earth itself have passed away and been forgotten in the dim past, then, clothed with an immortal and glorified body, we shall dwell in a building of God, a house not made with hands, "eternal in the heavens." O my soul, press forward! Pleasures forevermore await thee, an eternal weight of glory. O world to come, in exchange for the present! O ages, for a moment! A blessed eternal communion in the holy, blessed eternal life of God, in exchange for the sacrifices and sufferings of a few short years of earth. For the joy set before me I willingly endure hardness as a good soldier for Christ Jesus. Yes, gladly will I forsake home and loved ones to preach thy gospel, and in exchange receive a home "eternal in the heavens."

Since this earth will have an end, what a consoling thought to know "in ourselves that ye have *in heaven* a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. 10:34). "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling

and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 1:10, 11. We here enter the kingdom of grace, and thus become prepared for an abundant entrance into the future and everlasting kingdom of glory. This is not a literal something upon earth, as many blind zealots imagine, but it is "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God" (1 Pet. 1:4, 5). "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." 2 Tim. 4:18. Oh blessed hope! "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." My soul rests upon the promises of his Word, awaiting "the hope which is laid up for you *in heaven*" (Col. 1:5).

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Matt. 6:20. "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which

wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." Luke 12:33. "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Matt. 19:21. If this earth were to be our eternal portion, then our treasure should be laid up here; but since it is temporal, we are commanded to lay up our treasures in heaven. Though we may be poor in this world's goods, yet if we serve God we "shall have treasure in heaven." Instead of getting our reward in this earth as some teach, we shall be rewarded in heaven. "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Matt. 5:12. "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Luke 6:23.

Surely these multiplied texts are sufficient to establish the fact that heaven will be the future and eternal home of the church. Jesus, speaking of that future state, said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I

would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3. In the Scriptures we have "Christ's house" and "the Father's house"; Christ's kingdom of grace here, and the Father's kingdom of glory above. The one applies to the earth, the other to heaven. In the above passage Christ speaks of our future hope. By the "Father's house" he means heaven, for that is the Father's dwelling-place. Christ's house is the church here upon earth. By entering the latter we have access to the former. By "mansions" he desired the disciples to know that heaven, the Father's domain, was large and spacious. He did not wish, as sectarians believe, to convey the idea that everybody would have a separate house up there; but he resorted to language that his hearers could understand. He spoke from the standpoint of a literal building so they could comprehend his meaning. Since the Father's house is so spacious, contains many mansions, "I go to prepare a place for you." Christ went into heaven (Luke 24:51). So in heaven he is preparing our eternal home.

It may be objected that it has been prepared from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34). Yes, the kingdom of heaven, or heaven itself, was prepared from the foundation of the world; but in that kingdom, Christ went to prepare a place for us. Again, Christ was a Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world." Yet, in reality, it was fulfilled when he came. So with the place prepared for us. Christ, in reality, went to prepare it for us; and the promise is that he will come again, not to remain here upon earth with us, but to receive us to himself, that where he is there we may be also; that is, he will come back and take his church home to glory, to the world he went to prepare.

When will all this be fulfilled? "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. Oh, the beauty of heavenly truth! The church came out of heaven, and at last it will all be caught up to heaven and be ever with the Lord

"But," says one, "did not Jesus teach that the meek 'shall inherit the earth' (Matt. 5:5)? The Psalmist adds, 'But the meek shall inherit the earth.' Psa. 37:11. How harmonize these scriptures?" Peter fully explains them. He first shows that in the day of judgment this terrestrial globe, this earth, will pass away by being burned up. He foretells its utter destruction: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Pet. 3:10. "What, then, about the promise of Jesus, that the meek shall inherit the earth?" The apostle answers, "We, according to his promise, *look for new heavens and a new earth.*" Verse 13. How clear! "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth" after the heavens and the earth that compose this globe are "burned up" and "pass away" (2 Pet. 3:7-13). Peter is speaking of that land of light and bliss which Jesus went to prepare.

Also, the Revelator, after describing the judgment-scene, when this earth and its heavens fled away, "and there was found no place for them"

(Rev. 20: 11-15), says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." Rev. 21: 1. Mark you! He saw the new heaven and the new earth after "the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." When did they pass away? Answer: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20: 11, 12. How did they pass away? Answer: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Pet. 3: 10.

So, then, after this earth has passed away, we look for new heavens and a new earth (verse 13). The new earth is the "heavenly country," the "better country" (Heb. 11: 16). The new

heaven is the "heavenly city," the one "to come" (Heb. 11:16, 13, 14). "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14.

"There is a land where everlasting suns shed everlasting brightness,
Where the soul drinks from the living streams which roll by God's high throne.
Myriads of glorious ones bring their accepted offerings.
Oh, how blest to look from this dark prison to that shrine,
To inhale one breath of paradise divine,
And enter into the eternal home of rest, which awaits the sons of God!"

The new heavens and the new earth will be so much grander than this that the present heavens and earth "shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa. 65:17); and, unlike the present heavens and earth, which shall pass away, the new heavens and new earth "shall remain" (Isa. 66:22). The golden city brought to view in Revelation 21 and 22 will be the capital of the new earth, and in it the King of heaven will have his throne and reign forever and ever. In that world the righteous will "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," yea, "as the stars forever and ever."

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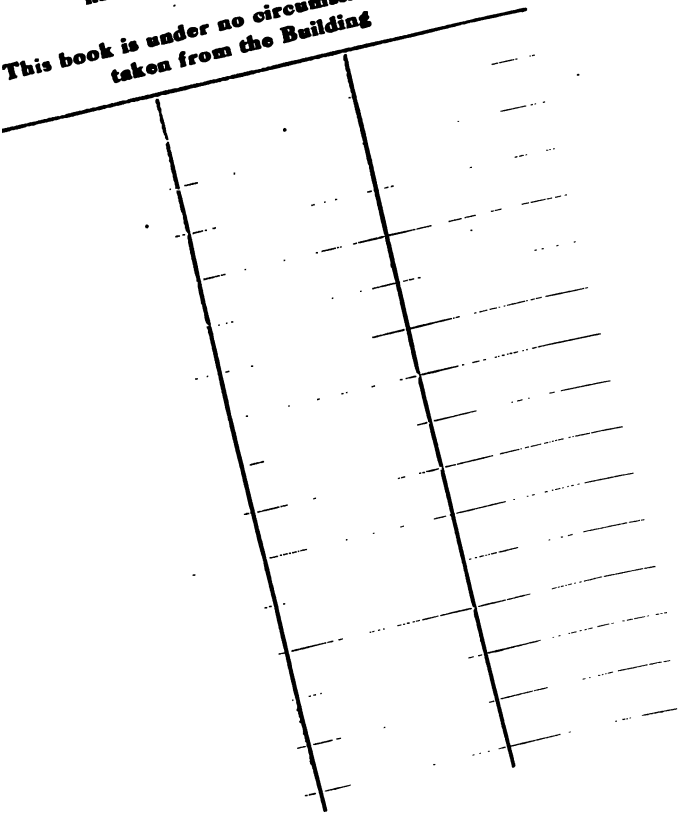

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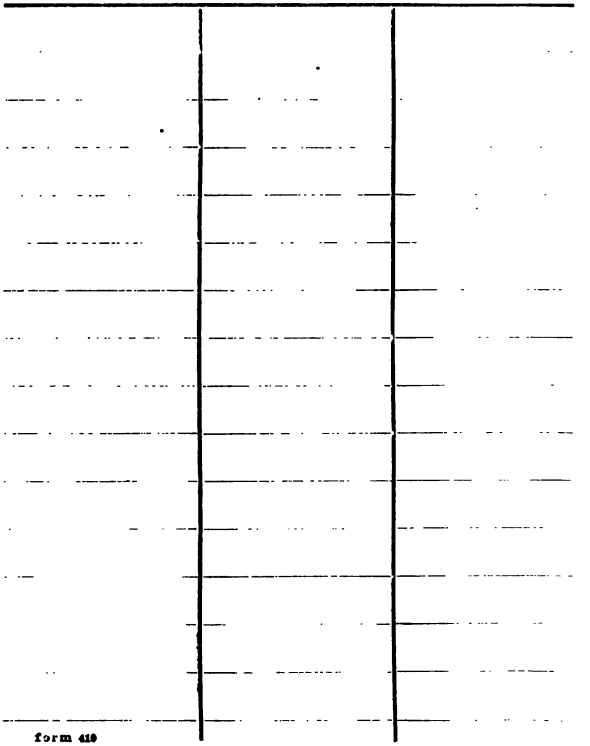

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